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Golden Treasury Series

A BOOK OF ENGLISH VERSE ON
INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD

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TORONTO

A BOOK OF
ENGLISH VERSE
ON
INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD

CHOSEN BY
L. S. WOOD

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TO
THE SWEET MEMORY
OF MY LITTLE DAUGHTER
TENNY
(ETHEL CAROLINE TENNANT WOOD)

14 NOV 1916—7 JUNE 1919

Primitiae Deo et Agno Sacrae

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INTRODUCTION

THIS Anthology is not a book of verse for children, but a book of verse about children. It has been said that childhood is the discovery of English poetry, but there appears to exist on this theme no representative anthology of English verse,¹—under which title is included American verse. Childhood has been interpreted in its real sense, that is, as covering the first twelve years of life. With the 'teens' begin other interests and characteristics.

Childhood is the period of our lives which the majority of us find it most difficult to recall. It is true that we remember the incidents of its later years. The² setting of the picture remains more or less vivid. But the inner meaning—*how we felt*—has become a sealed book to too many. Few retain the inner light, which Vaughan and Wordsworth sighed for not wholly in vain, that³ enables them to

¹ travel back
And tread again that ancient track

The activities and trivialities of earth have blotted out the unsullied vision of childhood and caused it to fade into the light of common day

It is this sense of remoteness that has inspired in finer natures a reverence for childhood that is akin to awe. Francis Thompson felt it.

I would not fear thee, sweet, at all,
Wert thou not so harmless-small

Mr G. K. Chesterton doubts if anyone of any tenderness or imagination can see the hand of a child and not be a little frightened of it. If our behaviour to children seems condescending, it cloaks a profound respect. We feel that they and their ways are supernatural.

One reason for this is our sense of children's vast potentialities—far greater than ours, since as yet they are untrammelled by upbringing and custom—and their complete unconsciousness of their own wealth. 'Our misery,' wrote Thomas Traherne in his *Centuries of Meditation*, 'proceedeth ten thousand times more from the outward bondage of opinion and custom, than from any inward corruption or depravation of Nature.'

It is not our parents' loins, so much as our parents' lives, that enthralls and blinds us . . . In my pure primitive virgin Light, while my apprehensions were natural and unmixed, I cannot remember but that I was ten thousand times more prone to good and excellent things than evil.

Another feature of childhood that eludes us is children's unquestioning acceptance of the order of things in which they find themselves. The writer of the twenty-third Psalm has given the most complete picture of earthly happiness that has ever been drawn. He conceived a

state of mind accepting earthly conditions and circumstances without question or doubt, secure from every care through a sense of Divine protection, and enjoying the gifts of Nature with gratitude and simplicity. He depicts that contentment that appears to lie within the reach of all, but to which none attain. Yet childhood inhabits this country. This Heaven lies about us in our infancy. The Psalmist has described no unknown land but the land through which most of us have travelled on our way to riper years. Possibly the memory of it was his inspiration.

It seems to the compiler that there is a place for a representative anthology of English verse upon infancy and childhood. The poets are the world's 'Seers'. They are less influenced by custom and convention than other men. They are more conscious of human potentiality and have a clearer vision of human destiny. In these and other ways they are nearer to childhood and more able to interpret it. Moreover, poems on childhood are comparatively few in number, and many of them are little known. They are scattered in many volumes by many writers, and the light they throw on the most beautiful period of human life is thus lost to persons who are interested in children but who are not regular readers of poetry.

In this book the aim has been to present poetry for poetry's sake. The compiler has used what judgment and ability he has to bind into the garland nothing that is not worthy of the august name of Poetry—nothing that does not reach a certain level of genius.

For this reason many poems beautiful in conception but lacking something in finish and form have been excluded. Others, some of them well known, have been excluded on the ground that they treat of childhood sentimentally, that is to say with conventional emotion. A severe critic may discover here and there a poem that owes its presence rather to the happy choice of its subject than to its intrinsic merits. And poems reminiscent of childhood, poems of motherhood, incidents from human life and even aspects of Nature have been included deliberately, in order to give variety to the collection and to lighten the task of the reader. No verbal changes have been made, but a few of the poems have been extracted from longer poems and, in the case of Shakespeare, from plays. In others omissions have been made when it seemed that by doing so a greater unity of idea or a more uniform level of excellence was secured. In a subject anthology such as this the task of the gatherer is less easy than in a general anthology. In a general anthology there is no limitation but length of poem, size of volume and the law of copyright. In a subject anthology these restrictions exist, but there is added to them the limitation of subject. The aim here has been to offer a book that is representative, not exhaustive, and representative of the poetry on the subject, not of any particular poet, the bulk of whose work may have lain, and in most cases did lie, in other directions.

A chronological order—chronological according to the authors' dates of birth—has been

adopted as being on the whole the most interesting and the most satisfactory. This arrangement has not been rigidly kept in the case of living authors.

The earliest child poem in the language is *The Pearl*, which dates from the fourteenth century. The poem is some twelve hundred lines in length, selection would not be easy, and were any portion of it included in the present volume it would be necessary to modernise the language. But reference must be made to it. The poet laments the loss of a daughter in early years. Falling asleep on the grave from sorrow, he visits in dreams a strange country, where he meets a white-robed maiden whom eventually he recognises. He asks her whether she is really his Pearl, since whose loss he has been 'a joyless jeweller'. The picture of the maiden, the review of Heaven, the painting of the scenery, and, above all, the strong passion of the writer make the poem a notable one.

William Langland, in the *Vision of Piers Plowman*, tells us the interesting fact that children became so precious as a result of the Black Death that there was a tendency to spoil them, a tendency not common in the fourteenth century. Chaucer has given two notable pictures of childhood, the little clergeoun of the *Prioress' Tale* and the children of Erl Hugelyn of Pyze, in the tale of the Monk, who concludes by referring his hearers to Dante. But what struck foreigners at this time was rather the lack of affection the English showed to their children. At the age of seven to nine years

boys and girls alike were bound to hard service as apprentices in the houses of other people, whence they seldom returned. In the upper classes younger sons habitually went out as pages, and the *Paston Letters* give the impression that middle-class homes were too full of the hard business of life to allow of much room for the domestic affections.

Southwell's *Burning Babe* stands prominent among that class of poems to which later child poetry probably owes much of its inspiration, poems written in honour of the Infant Christ. Before Southwell was hanged as a Jesuit, Shakespeare was already famous. The drama does not lend itself to the portrayal of childhood, though children had figured in some of the Mystery Plays. In the moving scene of Hubert and Arthur in *King John*, Arthur does not speak as a normal child, nor in the scene in which Gloucester commits the Princes to the Tower in *Richard III* is the Prince's interest in the history of the Tower natural. None the less children pass naturally across the background of several of Shakespeare's plays, and from his day, in spite of the damping influence of Puritanism with its insistence upon intellectualism and conversion, and the consequent *im*-perfection of childhood, children figure more and more in our poetry.

In the child poetry of the seventeenth century Thomas Traherne to-day takes the foremost place, though, until his work was given to the world within the last few years by Mr Bertram Dobell, that place was held by Vaughan. Were

it not certain that Traherne's work was unknown to Wordsworth, it would have been difficult to believe that he did not owe to him some of his inspiration

William Blake is the great child poet of the eighteenth century Of Blake, Lamb and Wordsworth were younger contemporaries and from the days of Wordsworth, the Laureate of Childhood, and of his disciple Hartley Coleridge, the claims and possibilities of childhood as a theme for poetry have been more and more generally realised Wordsworth is not less the poet of Childhood than the poet of Nature Children enter naturally into many of his poems that are not child poems It would be difficult to find a more haunting passage in English Literature than the lines in *Ruth*

I, too, have passed her on the hills
Setting her little water mills
By spouts and fountains wild—
Such small machinery as she turned
Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,
A young and happy Child¹

After Wordsworth, Landor, Keble, Barnes, Longfellow, Whittier, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Coventry Patmore, Robert Louis Stevenson, T E Brown, Swinburne and Francis Thompson are some of the names that are prominent It would be easy to name many contemporary poets The way of regarding childhood that was the gospel of the few—for Blake, Wordsworth and Lamb were writing of the wonder, the sanctity and the indefeasible rights of child-

hood during the worst days of the callous brutality to children that marked the Industrial Revolution—has become during the last hundred years the accepted creed of the many. “

I owe much to my friends Mr. and Mrs. G. K. Chesterton, Professor Oliver Elton, Mr. Edmond Holmes, Judge A. Romer Macklin and Mr. Dover Wilson have read large portions of the MS. and given valued advice. I also record my thanks to Miss Bertha Brown and my daughter Angela for copying several of the poems, to Miss A. McIntosh—‘Nannie’—for many times rearranging the disordered pages of the MS., and to Miss Dora Nussey for help with some of the proofs.

For permission to include copyright poems—permission that has often amounted to far more than consent—thanks are due to the Marquess of Crewe, the Earl of Rosslyn, Dr. Greville MacDonald, and the Rev. F. M. T. Palgrave for their fathers’ poems, and to Mrs. Duffin for *Angels* by her father, J. S. Drennan; to Miss Laura B. King for the poem by her mother, Mrs. Hamilton King, to Mrs. William Allingham, Mrs. Beeching, Mrs. Edward Dowden, Mrs. F. W. H. Myers, and Mrs. Coventry Patmore for selections from the works of their respective husbands; to Sir Herbert Stephen, Bart., for his brother’s poem *Blue Hills*, and to Mr. Wilfrid Meynell for Francis Thompson’s poems.

For the poems appearing under their names I have to express my gratitude to the Poet Laureate, Dr. Robert Bridges, Mr. Henry

Allsopp, Mr. ³ Hilaire Belloc, Mr Laurence Binyon, Mr. John le Gay Brereton, Mr William Canton, Mr. P R Chalmers, Mr and Mrs G. K Chesterton, Mr W H. Davies, the Rev W. J Dawson, Mr Austin Dobson, Mrs. Helen Parry Eden, Mr John Freeman, Miss Rose Fyleman, Mr² W. W Gibson, Lady Glenconner, Mr Edmund Gosse, Mr Thomas Hardy, Mrs Katharine Tynan Hinkson, Mr E G. A. Holmes, Mr. F M Hueffer, Mr. Rudyard Kipling, Mr Shane Leslie, Mr S R. Lysaght, Mr Hugh Macnaghten, Mr Walter de la Mare, Mr John Masefield, Miss Annie Mathe-son, Mrs Meynell, Sir Henry Newbolt, Mrs M³ Nightingale, Mr Alfred Noyes, Mr James Rhoades, Mr G W Russell, Sir Owen Seaman, Miss Cicely Fox Smith, Sir Rabindranath Tagore, Mrs M. St J. Webb, Mrs Margaret L Woods, and Mr G Winthrop Young

My obligations to publishers are included in the Notes

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J

L. S. W.

THE CLIFF, ILKLEY,
YORKS, 6th August, 1920.

Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray and the disciples rebuked them But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence

Matt xix 13-15

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them and his disciples rebuked those that brought them But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

Mark x 13-16.

And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of God Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

Luke xviii. 15-17

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. . . . Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven

Matt. xviii. 1-6 and 10

A Book of English Verse on Infancy and Childhood

ANONYMOUS

, I

FIFTEENTH CENTURY CAROL

I sing of a maiden
That is makeles,
King of all kings
To her son she ches.

He came al so still
There his mother was,
As dew in April
That falleth on the grass.

He came al so still
To his mother's bour,
As dew in April
That falleth on the flour.

He came al so still
There his mother lay,
As dew in April
That falleth on the spray.

Mother and maiden
Was never none but she ;
Well may such a lady
Goddes mother be.

JOHN SKELTON

II

TO MAYSTRESS ISABELL PENNELL

By saynt Mary, my lady,
 Your mammy and your dady
 Brought forth a godely babi !
 My mayden Isabell,
 Reflaring rosabell,
 The flagrant camamell ,
 The ruddy rosary,
 The souerayne rosemary,
 The praty strawbery ,
 The columbyne, the nepte,
 The ieloffer well set,
 The propre vyolet ;
 Enuwyd your colowre
 Is lyke the dasy flowre
 After the Aprill showre ,
 Sterre of the morow gray,
 The blossom on the spray,
 The fresshest flowre o. May ;
 Maydenly demure,
 Of womanhode the 'ure ,
 Wherefore I make you sure,
 It were an heuenly helth,
 It were an endeles welth,
 A lyfe for God hymselfe,
 To here this nightingale,
 Amonge the byrdes smale,
 Warbelynge in the vale,
 Dug, dug,
 Iug, iug,
 Good yere and good luk,
 With chuk, chuk, chuk, chuk !

RICHARD EDWARDES

III

MADRIGAL

In going to my naked bed,
 As one that would have slept,
 I heard a wife sing to her child
 That long before had wept.
 She sighèd sore and sang full sweet
 To bring the babe to rest,
 That would not cease, but crièd still
 In sucking at her breast

She was full weary of her watch,
 And grieyèd with her child
 She rockèd it, and rated it,
 Till that on her it smil'd.
 Then did she say, ' Now have I found
 This proverb true to prove,
 " The falling out of faithful friends
 Renewing is of love." '

EDMUND SPENSER

IV

THE POET'S BOYHOOD

Whilome in youth, when flower'd my joyful
 spring,
 Like swallow swift I wandred here and there,
 For heate of needlesse lust me so did sting,
 That I of doubted danger had no feare :
 I went the wastefull woodes and forest wide,
 Withouten dreade of wolves to bene espyed.

I wont to raunge amydde the mazie thickette,
 And gather nuttes to make me Christmas game,
 And joyed oft to chase the trembling pricket,

Or hunt the hartless hare till she vere tame.
 What wreakèd I of wintrye ages waste ?—
 Tho deemèd I my spring would ever laste.

How often have I scaled the craggie oke,
 All to dislodge the raven of her nest ?
 How have I wearied with many a stroke
 The stately walnut-tree, the while the rest
 Under the tree fell all for nuts at strife ?
 For ylike to me was libertee and lyfe.

v

CHILDREN IN PROCESSION

And, them before, the fry of children young
 Their wanton sports and childish mirth did
 play,
 And to the Maidens' sounding timbrels sung
 In well attuned notes a joyous lay,
 And made delightful musick all the way.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

vi

CHILD-SONG

Sleepe, babie mine, Desire's nurse, Beautie,
 singeth,
 Thy cries, O babie, set mine head on aking
 The babe cries, 'Way, thy love doth keepe me
 waking'
 Lully, lully, my babe, Hope cradle bringeth
 Unto my children alway good rest taking
 The babe cries, 'Way, thy love doth keepe me
 waking'
 Since, babie mine, from me thy watching
 springeth,
 Sleepe then, a little; pap Content is making.
 The babe cries, 'Nay, for that abide I waking.'

ANONYMOUS (? XV. CENTURY)

VII

LULLY, LULLAY

Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child ;
 By, by, lullay, lullay, thou little tiny child ,
 By, by, lully, lullay.

O sisters too ! how may we do,
 For to preserve this day
 This poor youngling, for whom we do sing
 By, by, lully, lullay ?

Herod, the king, in his raging,
 Chargèd he hath this day
 His men of might, in his own sight,
 All young children to slay

That woe is me, poor child for thee !
 And ever morn and day,
 For thy parting neither say nor sing,
 By, by, lully, lullay.

ROBERT GREENE

VIII

SEPHESTIA'S SONG TO HER CHILD

Weep not, my Wanton ! smile upon my knee ;
 When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.
 Mothe's wag, pretty boy,
 Father's sorrow, father's joy !
 When thy father first did see
 Such a boy by him and me ,
 He was glad , I was woe ,
 Fortune changèd made him so,
 When he left his pretty boy,
 Last his sorrow, first his joy.

Weep not, my Wanton ! smile upon my knee ;
 When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.
 Streaming tears that never stint,
 Like pearl-drops from a flint,
 Fell by course from his eyes,
 That one another's place supplies :
 Thus he grieved in every part ;
 Tears of blood fell from his heart,
 When he left his pretty boy,
 Father's sorrow, father's joy

Weep not, my Wanton ! smile upon my knee ;
 When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.
 The Wanton smiled ; father wept,
 Mother cried, baby leapt ,
 More he crowed, more we cried,
 Nature sorrow could not hide .
 He must go, he must kiss,
 Child and mother ; baby bless ;
 For he left his pretty boy,
 Father's sorrow, father's joy

Weep not, my Wanton ! smile upon my knee ;
 When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL

IX

THE BURNING BABE

As I in hoary winter's night Stood shivering in
 the snow,
 Surprised I was with sudden heat, Which made
 my heart to glow ;
 And lifting up a fearful eye To view what fire
 was near,
 A pretty babe all burning bright Did in the
 air appear ,
 Who, scorched with excessive heat, Such floods
 of tears did shed,

As though His floods should quench His flames,
 Which with His tears were bred —
 ' Alas ! ' quoth He, ' but newly born, In fiery
 heats I fry,
 Yet none approach to warm their hearts Or feel
 my fire but I !

' My faultless breast, the furnace is ; The fuel,
 wounding thorns ;
 Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke , The ashes
 shames and scorns ;
 The fuel Justice layeth on, And Mercy blows
 the coals,
 The metal in this furnace wrought Are men's
 defilèd souls .
 For which, as now on fire I am To work them to
 their good ,
 So will I melt into a bath To wash them in my
 blood ! '
 With this He vanish'd out of sight, And swiftly
 shrunk away ,
 And straight I callèd unto mind That it was
 Christmas-day

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

x

BOYS' FRIENDSHIP

We were
 Two lads that thought there was no more behind,
 But such a day to-morrow as to-day,
 And to be boy eternal.
 We were as twinn'd lambs that did frisk i' the
 sun,
 And bleat the one at th' other · what we chang'd,
 Was innocence for innocence ; we knew not
 The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream'd
 That any did. Had we pursu'd that life,

And our weak spirits ne'er been higher rear'd
 With stronger blood, we should have answer'd
 heaven
 Boldly, ' Not guilty ' ; the imposition clear'd,
 Hereditary ours

XI

GIRLS' FRIENDSHIP

Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,
 The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
 When we have chid the hasty-footed time
 For parting us,—O ! is it all forgot ?
 All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence ?
 We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
 Have with our needles created both one flower,
 Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
 Both warbling of one song, both in one key,
 As if our hands, our sides, voices and minds,
 Had been incorporate So we grew together,
 Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
 But yet a union in partition,
 Two lovely berries moulded on one stem.
 So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart ;
 Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,
 Due but to one, and crown'd with one crest.

. . . We still have slept together,
 Rose at an instant, learn'd, play'd, eat together
 And wheresoe'er we went, like Juno's swans,
 Still we went coupled and inseparable

XII

THE GRIEF OF ARTHUR'S MOTHER

I am not mad : this hair I tear is mine ;
 My name is Constance ; I was Geoffrey's wife ;
 Young Arthur is my son, and he is lost :
 I am not mad ,—I would to Heaven I were !

For then 'tis like I should forget myself
 O, if I could, what grief should I forget !—
 Preach some philosophy to make me mad,
 And thou shalt be canoniz'd, cardinal ;
 For, being not mad, but sensible of grief,
 My reasonable part produces reason
 How I may be deliver'd of these woes,
 And teaches me to kill or hang myself .
 If I were mad, I should forget my son,
 Or madly think a babe of clouts were he
 I am not mad too well, too well I feel
 The different plague of each calamity. . . .

And, father cardinal, I have heard you say
 That we shall see and know our friends in
 Heaven .

If that be true, I shall see my boy again ,
 For, since the birth of Cain, the first male
 child,

To him that did but yesterday suspire,
 There was not such a gracious creature born
 But now will canker sorrow eat my bud,
 And chase the native beauty from his cheek,
 And he will look as hollow as a ghost,
 As dim and meagre as an ague's fit ,
 And so he'll die , and, rising so again,
 When I shall meet him in the Court of Heaven
 I shall not know him . therefore never, never
 Must I behold my pretty Arthur more . . .

Grief fills the room up of my absent child,
 Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,
 Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,
 Remembers me of all his gracious parts,
 Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form
 Then, have I reason to be fond of grief . .

O Lord ! my boy, my Arthur, my fair son !
 My life, my joy, my food, my all the world !
 My widow-comfort, and my sorrow's cure !

XIII

*SIR JAMES TYRREL ON THE MURDER
OF THE PRINCES*

The tyrannous and bloody act is done ;
 The most arch deed of piteous massacre
 That ever yet this land was guilty of
 Dighton and Forrest, whom I did suborn
 To do this piece of ruthless butchery,
 Albeit they were flesh'd villains, bloody dogs,
 Melting with tenderness and mild compassion,
 Wept like to children in their death's sad story
 ' O thus,' quoth Dighton, ' lay the gentle
 babes,'—
 ' Thus, thus,' quoth Forrest, ' girdling one
 another
 Within their alabaster innocent arms ,
 Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,
 Which in their summer beauty kiss'd each other
 A book of prayers on their pillow lay ,
 Which once,' quoth Forrest, ' almost chang'd
 my mind ,
 But, O, the devil '—there the villain stopp'd ,
 When Dighton thus told on,—' we smothered
 The most replenish'd sweet work of nature,
 That, from the prime creation, e'er she fram'd '
 Hence both are gone with conscience and remorse
 They could not speak , and so I left them
 both,
 To bear this tidings to the bloody king

RICHARD ROWLANDS

XIV

LULLABY

Upon my lap my sovereign sits,
 And sucks upon my breast ;

Meantime his love maintains my life
 And gives my sense her rest.
 Sing lullaby, my little boy,
 Sing lullaby, mine only joy !

When thou hast taken thy repast,
 Repose, my babe, on me ,
 So may thy mother and thy nurse
 Thy cradle also be
 Sing lullaby, my little boy,
 Sing lullaby, mine only joy !

I grieve that duty doth not work
 All that my wishing would,
 Because I would not be to thee
 But in the best I should
 Sing lullaby, my little boy,
 Sing lullaby, mine only joy !

Yet as I am, and as I may,
 I must and will be thine,
 Though all too little for thy self
 Vouchsafing to be mine
 Sing lullaby, my little boy,
 Sing lullaby, mine only joy !

THOMAS DEKKER

xv

LULLABY

Golden slumbers kiss your eyes,
 Smiles awake you when you rise
 Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,
 And I will sing a lullaby,
 Rock them, rock them, lullaby

Care is heavy, therefore sleep you,
 You are care, and care must keep you
 Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,

And I will sing a lullaby,
Rock them, rock them, lullaby

JOHN DONNE

XVI

THE NATIVITY

Immensity, cloister'd in thy dear womb,
Now leaves His well-beloved imprisonment
Where He hath made Himself to His intent
Weak enough now into our world to come
But O! for thee, for Him, hath th' inn no
 room?
Yet lay Him in this stall, and from th' orient,
Stars, and wise men will travel to prevent
The effects of Herod's jealous general doom
See'st thou, my soul, with thy faith's eye, how
 He
Which fills all place, yet none holds Him, doth
 he?
Was not His pity towards thee wondrous high,
That would have need to be pitied by thee?
Kiss Him, and with Him into Egypt go,
With His kind mother, who partakes thy woe.

XVII

*EPITAPH ON MISTRESS DOROTHY
DRURY, NIECE OF FRANCIS BACON*

She little promised much,
Too soon untied.
She only dreamt she lived,
And then she died.

BEN JONSON

XVIII

LILY OF A DAY

It is not growing like a tree
 In bulk, doth make Man better be,
 Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
 To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere.
 A lily of a day
 Is fairer far in May,
 Although it fall and die that night—
 It was the plant and flower of Light
 In small proportions we just beauties see,
 And in short measures life may perfect be

XIX

ON MY FIRST SON

Farewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy;
 My sin was too much hope of thee, lov'd boy
 Seven years thou wert lent to me, and I thee
 pay,
 Exacted by thy fate, on the just day
 Oh, could I lose all father, now! for why,
 Will man lament the state he should envy?
 To have so soon 'scaped world's, and flesh's rage,
 And, if no other misery, yet age!
 Rest in soft peace, and ask'd, say here doth lie
 BEN JONSON his best piece of poetry
 For whose sake henceforth all his vows be such,
 As what he loves may never like too much

XX

ON MY FIRST DAUGHTER

Here lies, to each her parents ruth,
 Mary, the daughter of their youth;

Yet all heaven's gifts being heaven's due,
It makes the father less to rue
At six months' end she parted hence
With safety of her innocence .
Whose soul heaven's Queen, whose name she
bears,
In comfort of her mother's tears,
Hath placed amongst her virgin-train
Where while that, severed, doth remain,
This grave partakes the fleshly birth ,
Which cover lightly, gentle earth !

RICHARD CORBET

XXI

TO VINCENT CORBET, HIS SON

What I shall leave thee, none can tell,
But all shall say I wish thee well :
I wish thee, Vin, before all wealth,
Both bodily and ghostly health ;
Nor too much wealth nor wit come to thee,
So much of either may undo thee
I wish thee learning not for show,
Enough for to instruct and know ,
Not such as gentlemen require
To prate at table or at fire
I wish thee all thy mother's graces,
Thy father's fortunes and his places.
I wish thee friends, and one at court,
Not to build on, but support ;
To keep thee not in doing many
Oppressions, but from suffering any.
I wish thee peace in all thy ways,
Nor lazy nor contentious days ;
And, when thy soul and body part,
As innocent as now thou art.

SIR JOHN BEAUMONT

XXII

ON MY DEAR SON, GERVASE

Can I, who have for others oft compiled
 The songs of death, forget my sweetest child,
 Which, like a flower crushed, with a blast is dead,
 And ere full time hangs down his smiling head,
 Expecting with clear hope to live anew,
 Among the angels fed with heavenly dew ?
 We have this sign of joy, that many days,
 While on the earth his struggling spirit stays,
 The name of Jesus in his mouth contains
 His only food, his sleep, his ease from pains
 O may that sound be rooted in my mind,
 Of which in him such strong effect I find
 Dear Lord, receive my son, whose winning love
 To me was like a friendship, far above
 The course of nature, or his tender age,
 Whose looks could all my bitter griefs assuage,
 Let his pure soul—ordained seven years to be
 In that frail body, which was part of me—
 Remain my pledge in heaven, as sent to show
 How to this port at every step I go.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND OF
HAWTHORNDEN

XXIII

*FOR THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD**The Angels*

Run, Shepherds, run where Bethl'hem blest
 appears,
 We bring the best of news, be not dismay'd—
 A Saviour there is born, more old than years,
 Amidst Heaven's rolling heights this earth who
 stay'd :

In a poor cottage inn'd, a Virgin 'maid,
 A weakling, did Him bear, Who all upbears,
 There is He poorly swaddl'd, in manger laid,
 To Whom too narrow swaddlings are our spheres :
 Run, Shepherds, run, and solemnize His birth ;
 This is that night, no, day grown great with bliss,
 In which the power of Satan broken is,
 In Heaven be glory, Peace unto the earth
 Thus singing through the air the Angels swam,
 And cope of stars re-echoèd the same

The Shepherds

O, than the fairest day, thrice fairer night !
 Night to best days in which a Sun doth rise,
 Of which that golden eye, which clears the skies,
 Is but a sparkling ray, a shadow light
 And blessèd ye—in silly pastors' sight—
 Mild creatures, in whose warm crib now lies
 That Heaven-sent Youngling, Holy-Maid-born
 Wight,
 Midst, end, beginning of our prophecies
 Blest cottage that hath flow'rs in winter spread,
 Though withered, blessèd grass, that hath the
 grace
 To deck and be a carpet to that place
 Thus sang, unto the sounds of oaten reed,
 Before the Babe the Shepherds, bowed on knees ;
 And springs ran nectar, honey dropped from
 trees

GEORGE WITHER

XXIV

SLEEP, BABY, SLEEP !

Sleep, baby, sleep ! What ails my dear,
 What ails my darling thus to cry ?
 Be still, my child, and lend thine ear,
 To hear me sing thy lullaby
 My pretty lamb, forbear to weep ;
 Be still, my dear ; sweet baby, sleep

Thou blessèd soul, what canst thou fear ?

What thing to thee can mischief do ?

Thy God is now thy father dear,

His holy Spouse thy mother too

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ,

Be still, my babe , sweet baby, sleep

Though thy' conception was in sin,

A sacred bathing thou hast had ,

And though thy birth unclean hath been,

A blameless babe thou now art made

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ,

Be still, my dear , sweet baby, sleep

While thus thy lullaby I sing,

For thee great blessings ripening be ,

Thine Elder Brother is a king,

And hath a kingdom bought for thee.

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ,

Be still, my babe , sweet baby, sleep

Sweet baby, sleep, and nothing fear ,

For whosoever thee offends

By thy protector threaten'd are,

And God and angels are thy friends

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ,

Be still, my babe , sweet baby, sleep

When God with us was dwelling here,

In little babes He took delight ,

Such innocents as thou, my dear,

Are ever precious in His sight.

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ,

Be still, my babe , sweet baby, sleep.

A little infant once was He ,

And strength in weakness then was laid

Upon His virgin mother's knee,

That power to thee might be convey'd.

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ,

Be still, my babe , sweet baby, sleep.

In this thy frailty and thy need

He friends and helpers doth prepare,

Which thee shall cherish, clothe, and feed,
For of thy weal they tender are
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ,
Be still, my babe , sweet baby, sleep.

The King of kings, when He was born,
Had not so much for outward ease ,
By Him such dressings were not worn,
Nor such-like swaddling-clothes as these.
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ,
Be still, my babe , sweet baby, sleep

Within a manger lodged thy Lord,
Where oxen lay and asses fed
Warm rooms we do to thee afford,
An easy cradle or a bed
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;
Be still, my babe , sweet baby, sleep

Thou wants that He did then sustain
Have purchased wealth, my babe, for thee ,
And by His torments and His pain
Thy rest and ease securèd be
My baby, then, forbear to weep ,
Be still, my babe , sweet baby, sleep

Thou hast, yet more, to perfect this,
A promise and an earnest got
Of gaining everlasting bliss,
Though thou, my babe, perceiv'st it not.
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ,
Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

WILLIAM BROWNE OF TAVISTOCK

xxv

PLAYING ON THE BEACH

Whoso hath seen young lads (to sport them-
selves)
Run in a low ebb to the sandy shelves ,

Where seriously they work in digging wells,
 Or building childish sorts of cockle-shells ,
 Or liquid water each to other bandy ,
 Or with the pebbles play at handy-dandy,
 Till unawares the tide hath clos'd them round,
 And they must wade it through or else be
 drowned.

XXVI

BOYS HUNTING A SQUIRREL

Then as a nimble squirrel from the wood,
 Ranging the hedges for his filberd-food,
 Sits peartly on a bough his brown nuts cracking,
 And from the shell the sweet white kernel taking,
 Till with their crooks and bags a sort of boys ,
 To share with him, come with so great a noise
 That he is forc'd to leave a nut nigh broke,
 And for his life leap to a neighbour oak,
 Thence to a beech, thence to a row of ashes ,
 Whilst through the quagmires, and red water
 plashes,
 The boys run dabb'ing thorough thick and thin ;
 One tears his hose, another breaks his shin,
 This, torn and tatter'd, hath with much ado
 Got by the briars , and that hath lost his shoe ,
 This drops his band , that headlong falls for
 haste ,
 Another cries behind for being last ,
 With sticks and stones and many a sounding
 holloa,
 The little fool, with no small sport, they follow,
 Whilst he, from tree to tree, from spray to spray,
 Gets to the wood, and hides him in his dray.

ROBERT HERRICK

XXVII

*TO HIS SAVIOUR, A CHILD ; A
PRESENT, BY A CHILD*

Go prettie child, and beare this Flower
 Unto thy little Saviour ,
 And tell Him, by that Bud now blown,
 He is the Rose of Sharon known ,
 When thou hast said so, stick it there
 Upon His Bibb, or Stomacher
 And tell Him, (for good handsell too)
 That thou hast brought a Whistle new,
 Made of a clean straight oaten reed,
 To charme His cries, (at time of need
 Tell Him, for Corall, thou hast none ,
 But if thou hadst, He sho'd have one ,
 But poore thou art, and knowne to be
 Even as monlesse, as He
 Lastly, if thou canst win a kisse
 From those mellifluous lips of His ,
 Then never take a second on,
 To spoile the first impression

XXVIII

GRACE FOR A CHILD

What God gives, and what we take,
 'Tis a gift for Christ His sake
 Be the meale of Beanes and Pease,
 God be thank'd for those, and these
 Have we flesh, or have we fish,
 All are Fragments from His dish
 He His Church save, and the King,
 And our Peace here, like a Spring,
 Make it ever flourishing

XXIX

ANOTHER GRACE FOR A CHILD

Here a little child I stand,
 Heaving up my either hand ,
 Cold as Paddocks though they be,
 Here I lift them up to Thee,
 For a Benizon to fall
 On our meat, and on us all

XXX

UPON A CHILD THAT DYED

Here s'he lies, a pretty bud,
 Lately made of flesh and blood
 Who, as soone, fell fast asleep,
 As her little eyes did peep
 Give her strewings , but not stir
 The earth, that lightly covers her

XXXI

UPON A CHILD AN EPITAPH

But borne, and like a short Delight,
 I glided by my Parents' sight
 That done, the harder Fates deny'd
 My longer stay, and so I dy'd
 If pittying my sad Parents' Teares,
 You'll spil a tear or two, with theirs
 And with some flow'rs my grave bestrew,
 Love and they'l thank you for't Adieu.

XXXII

*UPON A LADY THAT DYED IN CHILD-
BED, AND LEFT A DAUGHTER
BEHIND HER*

As Gilly flowers do but stay
To blow, and seed, and so away ,
So you sweet Lady (sweet as May)
The garden's-glory liv'd a while,
To lend the world your scen and smile.
But when your own faire print was set
Once in a Virgin Flosculet,
(Sweet as your selfe, and newly blown)
To give that life, resign'd your own :
But so, as still the mother's power
Lives in the pretty Lady-flower.

GEORGE HERBERT

XXXIII

HOLY BAPTISM

Since, Lord, to Thee
A narrow way and little gate
Is all the passage, on my infancy
Thou didst lay hold, and antedate
My faith in me.

O, let me still
Write Thee ' great God,' and me ' a child ',
Let me be soft and supple to 'thy will,
Small to myself, to others mild,
Behither ill

Although by stealth
My flesh get on ; yet let her sister,
My soul, bid nothing but preserve her wealth.
The growth of flesh is but a blister ;
Childhood is health.

THOMAS CAREW

XXXIV

*EPITAPH ON THE LADY MARY
VILLIERS*

The Lady Mary Villiers lies
 Under this stone , with weeping eyes
 The parents that first gave her birth,
 And their sad friends, laid her in earth
 If any of them, Reader, were
 Known unto thee, shed a tear ,
 Or if thyself possess a gem
 As dear to thee, as this to them,
 Though a stranger to this place,
 Bewail in theirs thine own hard case
 For thou perhaps at thy return
 May'st find thy Darling in an urn.

XXXV

ANOTHER

The purest soul, that e'er was sent
 Into a clayey tenement,
 Inform'd this dust , but the weak mould
 Could the great guest no longer hold
 The substance was too pure, the flame
 Too glorious, that thither came
 Ten thousand Cupids brought along
 A grace on each wing, that did throng
 For place there, till they all oppress'd
 The seat in which they sought to rest :
 So the fair model broke, for want
 Of room to lodge th' inhabitant.

XXXVI

ANOTHER

This little vault, this narrow room,
 Of Love and Beauty is the tomb,
 The dawning beam, that 'gan to clear
 Our clouded sky, lies darkened here,
 For ever set to us by Death
 Sent to enflame the World Beneath.

'Twas but a bud, yet did contain
 More sweetness than shall spring again;
 A budding star, that might have grown
 Into a Sun when it had blown
 This hopeful Beauty did create
 New life in Love's declining state,
 But now his empire ends, and we
 From fire and wounding darts are free;
 His brand, his bow, let no man fear:
 The flames, the arrows, all lie here

WILLIAM STRODE

XXXVII

THE LATEST LULLABY

(To Mistress Mary Prideaux)

Sleep, pretty one, O sleep, while I
 Sing thee thy latest lullaby:
 And may my song be but as she;
 Ne'er was sweeter harmony
 Thou wert all music all thy limbs
 Were but so many well-set hymns
 To praise thy Maker In thy brow
 I read thy soul, and know not how
 To tell which whiter was or smoother,
 Or more spotless, one or th' other
 No jar, no harshness in thee all
 Thy passions were at peace. no gall,

No rough behaviour , but even such
In disposition as in touch.

Yet Heaven, poor soul, was harsh to thee :
Death used thee not half orderly
If thou must needs go, must thy way
Needs be by torture ? Must thy day
End in the morning ? And thy night
Come with such horror and affright ?
Death might have seiz'd thee gentlier, and
Embrac'd thee with a softer hand
Thou wert not sure so loath to go,
That thou needst be draggèd so ,
For thou wert all obedience, and hadst wit
To do Heaven's will and not dispute with it.
Yet 'twere a hard heart, a dead eye,
That sighless, tearless, could stand by ,
While thy poor mother felt each groan
As much as e'er she did her own
When she groan'd for thee and thy cries
Marr'd not our ears more than her eyes
Yet if thou took'st some truce with pain,
Then was she melted more again
To hear thy sweet words, whilst thy breath
Faintly did strive to sweeten Death,
Call'dst for the music of thy knell,
And cri'dst, 'twas it must make thee well
Thus whilst your prayers were at strife,
Thine for thy death, hers for thy life,
Thine did prevail, and, on their wings,
Mounted thy soul where now it sings,
And never shall complain no more,
But for not being there before

Let her parents then confess
That they believe her happiness,
Which now they question Think as you
Lent her the world, Heaven lent her you :
And is it just, then, to complain
When each hath but his own again ?
Then, think what both your glories are
In her preferment for 'tis far

Nobler to get a saint, and bear
 A child to Heaven than an heir
 To a large empire. Think beside
 She died not young, but liv'd a bride.
 Your best wishes for her good
 Were but to see her well bestow'd
 Was she not so ? She married to
 The Heir of all things, who did owe
 Her infant soul, and bought it too
 Nor was she barren · mark'd you not
 Those pretty little Graces, that
 Play'd round about her sick-bed , three,
 Th' eld'st Faith, Hope and Charity ?
 'Twere pretty big ones, and the same
 That cried so on their Father's Name
 The young'st is gone with her the two
 Eldest stay to comfort you ;
 And little though they be, they can
 Master the biggest foes of man

Lastly think that her abode
 With you was some few years' board ;
 After, her marriage · now she's gone
 Home, royally attended on
 And if you had Elisha's sight
 To see the number of her bright
 Attendants thither , or Paul's rapt sprite
 To see her welcome there ,—why, then,
 Wish, if you could, her here again
 I'm sure you could not · but all passion
 Would lose itself in admiration,
 And strong longings to be there,
 Where, 'cause she is, you mourn for her.

ANONYMOUS (XVII CENTURY)

XXXVIII

THE CHILD'S DEATH

He did but float a little way
 Adown the stream of time ;

With dreamy eyes watching the ripples play,
Or listening to their chime.

His slender sail
Scarce felt the gale ,
He did but float a little way,
And, putting to the shore,
While yet 'twas early day,
Went calmly on his way,
To dwell with us no more
No jarring did he feel,
No grating on his vessel's keel ;
A strip of yellow sand
Mingled the waters with the land,
Where he was seen no more ,
O stern word, Nevermore !
Full short his journey was , no dust
Of earth unto his sandals clave ,
The weary weight, that old men must,
He bore not to the grave
He seem'd a cherub who had lost his way
And wander'd hither , so his stay
With us was short , and 'twas most meet
That he should be no delver in earth's clod,
Nor need to pause and cleanse his feet
To stand before his God.

XXXIX

*UPON ANNE WORLEY, AGED EIGHT
YEARS, WHO DIED 3rd SEPTEMBER
1653*

In quiet sleep, here lyes the deare remayne
Of a sweet Babe, the Father's joye and payne :
A prytty Infant, loved and lovinge, she
Was Lewtye's Abstract , love's Epitome .
A lytle Volume, but devine, whearein
Was seen both Paradice and Cherubin
While she lived here, which was but lytle space,
A few short yeares, earth had a Heavenly face ;

And dead she lookt a lovely peice of claye
After her shineinge soule was fled awaye
Reader, had'st thou her dissolution seen
Thou would'st have weept had'st thou this
Marble been

From a brass in the Chancel of Reigate Parish Church.

XL

CHRISTMAS CAROL

God bless the master of this house,
The mistress also,
And all the little children,
That round the table go,
And all your kin and kinsmen,
That dwell both far and near,
I wish you a merry Christmas
And a happy New Year

EDMUND WALLER

XLI

TO THE YOUNGER LADY LUCY
SYDNEY

Why came I so untimely forth
 Into a world which, wanting thee,
 Could entertain us with no worth,
 Or shadow of felicity ?
 That time should me so far remove
 From that which I was born to love
 Yet, fairest Blossom ! do not slight
 That eye which you may know so soon
 The rosy morn resigns her light
 And milder splendours to the noon
 If such thy dawning beauty's power
 Who shall abide its noon-tide hour ?

Hope waits upon the flowery prime ,
 And summer though it be less gay,
 Yet is not looked on as a time
 Of declination or decay ,
 For with a full hand she doth bring
 All that was promised by the spring

JOHN MILTON

XLII

*ON THE DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT
 DYING OF A COUGH*

O fairest flow'r, no sooner blown but blasted,
 Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,
 Summer's chief honour, if thou had'st outlasted
 Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dye ;
 For he being amorous on that lovely dye
 That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss
 But kill'd, alas, and then bewail'd his fatal bliss . .

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
 Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,
 Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
 Hid from the world in a low-delvèd tomb ,
 Could Heav'n for pity thee so strictly doom ?

Oh no ! for something in thy face did shine
 Above mortality, that shew'd thou wast divine

Resolve me then, O Soul most surely blest,
 (If so be it that thou these plaints dost hear)
 Tell me, bright Spirit, where'er thou hoverest,
 Whether above that high first-moving sphere,
 Or in the Elysian fields (if such there were),

O say me true if thou wert mortal wight,
 And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy
 flight

Wert thou some star which from the ruin'd roof
 Of shak't Olympus by mischance didst fall ,

Which careful Jove in nature's true behoof
Took up, and in fit place did reinstall ?
Or did of late Earth's sons besiege the wall
Of sheeny Heav'n, and thou some goddess fled
Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar'd
head ?

Or wert thou that just maid who once before
Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth,
And cam'st again to visit us once more ?
Or wert thou [Mercy], that sweet-smiling youth ?
Or that crown'd matron, sage white-robed Truth ?
Or any other of that heav'nly brood
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some
good ?

Or wert thou of the golden-winged host,
Who having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,
And after short abode fly back with speed,
As if to show what creatures Heav'n doth breed ;
Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire
To scorn the sordid world, and unto Heav'n
aspire ?

But oh, why didst thou not stay here below
To bless us with thy Heav'n-lov'd innocence,
To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our
foe,
To turn swift-rushing black perdition hence,
Or drive away the slaughtering pestilence,
To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart ?
But thou canst best perform that office where
thou art

Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
Her false imagin'd loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild,
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
And render Him with patience what He lent,
This if thou do, He will an offspring give,
That till the world's last end shall make thy
name to live

RICHARD CRASHAW

XLIII

*A HYMN OF THE NATIVITY, SUNG
BY THE SHEPHERDS*

Come, we shepherds, whose blest sight
Hath met Love's noon in Nature's night :
Come lift we up our loftier song,
And wake the sun that lies too long.

Gloomy night embraced the place
Where the noble Infant lay :
The Babe looked up, and shewed His face ;
In spite of darkness it was day :—
It was Thy day, sweet, and did rise,
Not from the East, but from Thine eyes.

We saw Thee in Thy balmy nest,
Young dawn of our eternal day ;
We saw Thine eyes break from the East,
And chase the trembling shades away :
We saw Thee, and we blest the sight,
We saw Thee by Thine own sweet light.

Poor world, said I, what wilt thou do
To entertain this starry stranger ?
Is this the best thou canst bestow—
A cold and not too cleanly manger ?
Contend, the powers of heaven and earth,
To fit a bed for this huge birth.

Proud world, said I, cease your contest,
And let the mighty Babe alone ;
The phoenix builds the phoenix' nest,
Love's architecture is His own.
The Babe, whose birth embraves this morn,
Made His own bed ere He was born.

I saw the curl'd drops, soft and slow,
Come hovering o'er the place's head,

Off'ring their whitest sheets or snow,
 To furnish the fair Infant's bed
 Forbear, said I, be not too bold ,
 Your fleece is white, but 'tis too cold

I saw th' obsequious seraphim
 Their rosy fleece of fire bestow.
 For well they now can spare their wings,
 Since Heaven itself lies here below
 Well done, said I , but are you sure
 Your down, so warm, will pass for pure ?

No, no, your King's not yet to seek
 Where to repose His royal head ,
 See, see how soon His new-bloom'd cheek
 'Twixt mother's breasts is gone to bed !
 Sweet choice, said we , no way but so
 Not to lie cold, yet sleep in snow !

Welcome, all wonders in one sight !
 Eternity shut in a span !
 Summer in winter ! Day in night !
 Heaven in earth ! and God in man !
 Great Little One, Whose all embracing birth
 Lifts earth to Heaven, stoops Heaven to earth.

Welcome, tho' nor to gold, nor silk,
 To more than Caesar's birthright is,
 Two sister-seas of Virgin-milk,
 With many a rarely-temper'd kiss,
 That breathes at once both Maid and Mother,
 Warms in the one, cools in the other

She sings Thy tears asleep, and dips
 Her kisses in Thy weeping eye ,
 She spreads the red leaves of Thy lips,
 That in their buds yet blushing lie
 She 'gainst those mother diamonds tries
 The points of her young eagle's eyes

Welcome—tho' not to those gay flies,
 Gilded i' th' beams of earthly kings,

Slippery souls in smiling eyes—

But to poor shepherds, homespun things,
Whose wealth's their flocks, whose wit's to be
Well read in their simplicity.

Yet, when young April's husband show'rs
Shall bless the fruitful Maia's bed,
We'll bring the first-born of her flowers,
To kiss Thy feet and crown Thy head
To Thee, dread Lamb, whose love must keep
The shepherds while they feed their sheep

To Thee, meek Majesty, soft King
Of simple graces and sweet loves !
Each of us his lamb will bring,
Each his pair of silver doves !
At last, in fire of Thy fair eyes,
Ourselves become our own best sacrifice !

XLIV

*FIRST LINES OF A HYMN TO THE NAME
AND HONOUR OF THE ADMIRABLE
SAINT TERESA, WHO, YET A CHILD,
OUTRAN MATURITY, AND DURST
PLOT A MARTYRDOM.*

Love, thou art absolute, sole Lord
Of life and death To prove the word,
We'll now appeal to none of all
Those Thy old soldiers, great and tall,
Ripe men of martyrdom, that could reach down
With strong arms their triumphant crown :
Such as could with lusty breath
Speak loud, unto the face of death,
Their great Lord's glorious name, to none
Of those whose spacious bosoms spread a throne
For love at large to fill. Spare blood and sweat :
We'll see Him take a private seat,
And make His mansion in the mild
And milky soul of a soft child.

Scarce has she learnt to lisp the name
Of martyr ; yet she thinks it shame
Life should so long play with that breath
Which spent can buy so brave a death
She never undertook to know
What death with love should have to do.
Nor has she e'er yet understood
Why, to show love, she should shed blood ;
Yet, though she cannot tell you why,
She can love and she can die

Scarce has she blood enough to make
A guilty sword blush for her sake ,
Yet has a heart dares hope to prove
How much less strong is death than love

Be love but there ; let poor six years
Be 'pos'd with the maturest tears
Man trembles at, you straight shall find
Love knows no nonage, nor the mind.
'Tis love, not years or limbs that can
Make the martyr, or the man

Love touch'd her heart, and lo it beats
High, and burns with such brave heats ,
Such thirsts to die, as dares drink up
A thousand cold deaths in one cup
Good reason. For she breathes all fire.
Her weak breast heaves with strong desire
Of what she may with fruitless wishes
Seek for amongst her Mother's kisses

Since 'tis not to be had at home
She'll travel to a martyrdom
No home for her, confesses she
But where she may a martyr be.

She'll to the Moors , and trade with them
For this unvalued diadem.
She'll offer them her dearest breath,
With Christ's name in 't, in change for death.
She'll bargain with them ; and will give
Them God ; teach them how to live.

In Him or, if they this deny,
 For Him she'll teach them how to die
 So shall she leave amongst them sown
 Her Lord's blood, or at least her own.

Farewell then, all the world ! Adieu !
 Teresa is no more for you
 Farewell, all pleasures, sports, and joys
 (Never till now esteemed toys) ,
 Farewell, whatever dear may be,
 Mother's arms or father's knee !
 Farewell house, and farewell home !
 She's for the Moors, and martyrdom.

Sweet, not so fast ! lo, thy fair spouse,
 Whom thou seek'st with so swift vows,
 Calls thee back, and bids thee come
 T' embrace a milder martyrdom

Blest Powers forbid thy tender life
 Should bleed upon a barbarous knife ,
 Or some base hand have power to raze
 Thy breast's chaste cabinet, and uncase
 A soul kept there so sweet O no,
 Wise Heav'n will never have it so . . .

ANDREW MARVELL

XLV

THE PICTURE OF LITTLE T. C. IN A PROSPECT OF FLOWERS

See with what simplicity
 This nymph begins her golden days !
 In the green grass she loves to lie,
 And there with her fair aspect tames
 The wilder flowers and gives them names ,
 But only with the roses plays,
 And them does tell
 What colour best becomes them, and what smell.

Who can foretell for what high cause
This darling of the gods was born ?

Yet this is she whose chaster laws
The wanton Love shall one day fear,
And, under her command severe,
See his bow broke and ensigns torn.
Happy who can
Appease this virtuous enemy of man !

O then let me in time compound
And parley with those conquering eyes,
Ere they have tried their force to wound ;
Ere with their glancing wheels they drive
In triumph over hearts that strive,
And them that yield but more despise :
Let me be laid,
Where I may see the glories from some shade

Meantime, whilst every verdant thing
Itself does at thy beauty charm,
Reform the errors of the Spring ,
Make that the tulips may have share
Of sweetness, seeing they are fair,
And roses of their thorns disarm ,
But most procure
That violets may a longer age endure

But O, young beauty of the woods,
Whom Nature courts with fruits and flowers,
Gather the flowers, but spare the buds ;
Lest Flora, angry at thy crime
To kill her infants in their prime,
Do quickly make th' example yours ;
And ere we see,
Nip in the blossom all our hopes and thee.

HENRY VAUGHAN

XLVI

THE RETREAT

Happy those early days, when I
Shined in my angel-infancy !
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white, celestial thought ,
When yet I had not walked above
A mile or two from my first love,
And looking back—at that short space—
Could see a glimpse of His bright face ,
When on some gilded cloud, or flower,
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity ,
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A several sin to every sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.

O how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track !
That I might once more reach that plain,
Where first I left my glorious train ,
From whence the enlightened spirit sees
That shady city of palm-trees.
But ah ! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way !
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move,
And, when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

XLVII

CHILDHOOD

I cannot reach it , and my striving eye
Dazzles at it, as at eternity.

Were now that chronicle alive,
Those white designs which children drive,
And the thoughts of each harmless hour,
With their content, too, in my power,
Quickly would I make my path even,
And by mere playing go to heaven.

Why should men love
A wolf, more than a lamb or dove ?
Or choose hell-fire and brimstone streams
Before bright stars and God's own beams ?
Who kisseth thorns will hurt his face,
But flowers do both refresh and grace,
And sweetly living—fie on men !—
Are, when dead, medicinal then ,
If seeing much should make staid eyes,
And long experience should make wise,
Since all that age doth teach is ill,
Why should I not love childhood still ?
Why, if I see a rock or shelf,
Shall I from thence cast down myself ?
Or, by complying with the world,
From the same precipice be hurled ?
Those observations are but foul,
Which make me wise to lose my soul
And yet the practice worldlings call
Business, and weighty action all,
Checking the poor child for his play, -
But gravely cast themselves away

Dear, harmless age ! the short, swift span
Where weeping virtue parts with man ,
Where love without lust dwells, and bends
What way we please without self-ends.

An age of mysteries ! which he
Must live twice that would God's face see ,
Which angels guard, and with it play—
Angels ! which foul men drive away.

How do I study now, and scan
Thee more than e'er I studied man,
And only see through a long night
Thy edges and thy bordering light !
O for thy centre and mid-day !
For sure that is the narrow way !

XLVIII

THE BURIAL OF AN INFANT

Blest infant bud, whose blossom-life
Did only look about, and fall
Wearied out in a harmless strife
Of tears, and milk, the food of all ,
Sweetly didst thou expire thy soul
Flew home unstain'd by his new kin ;
For ere thou knew'st how to be foul,
Death wean'd thee from the world, and sin.
Softly rest all thy virgin-crums
Lapt in the sweets of thy young breath,
Expecting till thy Saviour comes
To dress them, and unswaddle death !

JOHN DRYDEN

XLIX

ON JAMES II.'S INFANT SON

'Tis Paradise to look
On the fair frontispiece of Nature's book.
If the first opening page so charms the sight,
Think how th' unfolded volume will delight !

See how the venerable infant lies:
 In early pomp, how through the mother's
 eyes
 The father's soul with an undaunted view
 Looks out, and takes our homage as his due
 See on his future subjects how he smiles,
 Nor meanly flatters nor with craft beguiles,
 But with an open face, as on his throne,
 Assures our birthrights and assumes his own

L r

*ON THE DEATH OF A VERY YOUNG
 GENTLEMAN*

He who could view the book of destiny,
 And read whatever there was writ of thee,
 O charming youth, in the first opening page,
 So many graces in so green an age,
 Would wonder, when he turned the volume
 o'er,
 And after some few leaves should find no more,
 Nought but a blank remain, a dead void space,
 A step of life that promised such a race
 We must not, dare not think, that Heaven began
 A child, and could not finish him a man, . . .

Thus then he disappeared, was rarified,
 For 'tis improper speech to say he died
 He was exhaled, his great Creator drew
 His spirit, as the sun the morning dew
 'Tis sin produces death, and he had none,
 But the taint Adam left on every son
 He added not, he was so pure, so good,
 'Twas but th' original forfeit of his blood,
 And that so little, that the river ran
 More clear than the corrupted fount began . . .

THOMAS TRAHERNE

LI

THE SALUTATION

These little limbs,
 These eyes and hands which here I find,
 These rosy cheeks wherewith my life begins,
 Where have ye been ? behind
 What curtain were ye from me hid so long,
 Where was, in what abyss, my speaking tongue ?

When silent I
 So many thousand, thousand years
 Beneath the dust did in a chaos lie,
 How could I smiles or tears,
 Or lips or hands or eyes or ears perceive ?
 Welcome, ye treasures which I now receive

I that so long
 Was nothing from eternity,
 Did little think such joys as ear or tongue
 To celebrate or see
 Such sounds to hear, such hands to feel, such
 feet,
 Beneath the skies on such a ground to meet

New burnish'd joys !
 Which yellow gold and pearls excel !
 Such sacred treasures are the limbs in boys,
 In which a soul doth dwell,
 Their organised joints and azure veins
 More wealth include than all the world contains

From dust I rise,
 And out of nothing now awake,
 These brighter regions which salute mine eyes,
 A gift from God I take
 The earth, the seas, the light, the day, the
 skies,
 The sun and stars are mine, if those I prize

Long time before
 I in my mother's womb was born,
 A God preparing did this glorious store,
 The world, for me adorn
 Into this Eden so divine and fair,
 So wide and bright, I come His son and heir.

A stranger here
 Strange things doth meet, strange glories see ;
 Strange treasures lodg'd in this fair world appear,
 Strange all and new to me ;
 But that they mine should be, who nothing was,
 That strangest is of all, yet brought to pass

LII

WONDER

How like an Angel came I down !
 How bright are all things here !
 When first among His works I did appear
 O how their Glory me did crown !
 The world resembled His Eternity,
 In which my soul did walk ,
 And every thing that I did see
 Did with me talk

The skies in their magnificence,
 The lively, lovely air ,
 Oh how divine, how soft, how sweet, how fair !
 The stars did entertain my sense,
 And all the works of God, so bright and pure
 So rich and great did seem,
 As if they ever must endure
 In my esteem

A native health and innocence
 Within my bones did grow,
 And while my God did all his Glories show,
 I felt a vigour in my sense
 That was all Spirit I within did flow
 With seas of life, like wine ;

I nothing in the world did know
But 'twas divine

Harsh ragged objects were concealed,
Oppressions, tears and cries,
Sins, griefs, complaints, dissensions, weeping eyes
Were hid, and only things revealed
Which heavenly Spirits and the Angels prize.
The state of Innocence
And bliss, not trades and poverties,
Did fill my sense

The streets were paved with golden stones,
The boys and girls were mine,
Oh how did all their lovely faces shine !
The sons of men were holy ones,
In joy and beauty they appeared to me,
And every thing which here I found,
While like an Angel I did see,
Adorned the ground

Rich diamond and pearl and gold
In every place was seen ,
Rare splendours, yellow, blue, red, white, and
green,
Mine eyes did everywhere behold
Great wonders clothed with glory did appear,
Amazement was my bliss,
That and my wealth was everywhere ,
No joy to this !

Cursed and devised proprieties,
With envy, avarice
And fraud, those fiends that spoil even Paradise,
Flew from the splendour of mine eyes,
And so did hedges, ditches, limits, bounds,
I dreamed not aught of those,
But wandered over all men's grounds,
And found repose

Proprieties themselves were mine
And hedges ornaments,

Walls, boxes, coffers, and their rich contents
Did not divide my joys, but all combine
Clothes, ribbons, jewels, laces, I esteemed
My joys by others worn
For me they all to wear them seemed
When I was born

LIII

INNOCENCE

But that which most I wonder at, which most
I did esteem my bliss, which most I boast,
And ever shall enjoy, is that within
I felt no stain nor spot of sin.

No darkness then did overshadow,
But all within was pure and bright,
No guilt did crush nor fear invade,
But all my soul was full of light.

A joyful sense and purity
Is all I can remember,
The very night to me was bright,
'Twas Summer in December

A serious meditation did employ
My soul within, which taken up with joy
Did seem no outward thing to note, but fly
All objects that do feed the eye,

While it those very objects did
Admire and prize and praise and love,
Which in their glory most are hid,
Which presence only doth remove.

Their constant daily presence I
Rejoicing at, did see,
And that which takes them from the eye
Of others offered them to me.

No inward inclination did I feel
To avarice or pride ; my soul did kneel

In admiration all the day. No lust, nor strife,
Polluted then my infant life

No fraud nor anger in me mov'd,
No malice, jealousy, or spite ,
All that I saw I truly lov'd :
Contentment only and delight

Were in my soul ' O Heav'n ! what bliss
Did I enjoy and feel !
What powerful delight did this
Inspire ! for this I daily kneel

Whether it be that Nature is so pure,
And custom only vicious , or that sure
God did by miracle the guilt remove,
And made my soul to feel his Love

So early ' or that 'twas one day,
Wherein this happiness I found,
Whose strength and brightness so do ray,
That still it seems me to surround,

Whate'er it is, it is a Light
So endless unto me
That I a world of true delight
Did then, and to this day do see.

That prospect was the gate of Heaven, that day
The ancient Light of Eden did convey
Into my soul . I was an Adam there,
A little Adam in a sphere

Of joys ! O there my ravisht sense
Was entertained in Paradise,
And had a sight of Innocence,
Which was beyond all bound and price.

An antepast of Heaven sure !
I on the earth did reign,
Within, without me, all was pure :
I must become a child again.

LIV

THE RAPTURE

Sweet Infancy !
 O fire of heaven ! O sacred Light !
 How fair and bright !
 How great am I,
 Whom all the world doth magnify !

O Heavenly joy !
 O great and sacred blessedness
 Which I possess !
 So great a joy
 Who did into my arms convoy ?

From God above
 Being sent, the Heavens me enflame :
 To praise His Name
 The stars do move !
 The burning sun doth shew His love.

O how divine
 Am I ! To all this sacred wealth,
 This life and health,
 Who raised ? Who mine
 Did make the same ? What hand divine ?

SIR CHARLES SEDLEY

LV

CHILD AND MAIDEN

Ah, Chloris ! could I now but sit
 As unconcern'd as when
 Your infant beauty could beget
 No happiness or pain !
 When I the dawn used to admire,
 And praised the coming day,

I little thought the rising fire
 Would take my rest away

Your charms in harmless childhood lay
 Like metals in a mine ;
 Age from no face takes more away
 Than youth conceal'd in thine
 But as your charms insensibly
 To their perfection prest,
 So love as unperceived did fly,
 And center'd in my breast

My passion with your beauty grew,
 While Cupid at my heart
 Still as his mother favour'd you
 Threw a new flaming dart
 Each gloriè'd in their wanton part ,
 To make a lover, he
 Employ'd the utmost of his art—
 To make a beauty, she.

JOHN NORRIS

LVI

TO A CHILD IN HEAVEN

I care not, though it be
 By the preciser sort thought Popery ,
 We poets can a licence show
 For everything we do .
 Hear then, my little saint,—I'll pray to thee

If now thy happy mind
 Amidst its various joys can leisure find
 T' attend to anything so low
 As what I say or do,
 Regard, and be what thou wast ever—kind.

Let not the blest above
 Engross thee quite, but sometimes hither rove ;

Fain would I thy sweet image see,
 And sit and talk with thee,
 Nor is it curiosity, but love.

Ah, what delight 'twould be
 Wouldst thou sometimes by stealth converse
 with me !

How should I thy sweet commerce prize,
 And other joys despise !
 Come, then—I ne'er was yet denied by thee.

I would not long detain
 Thy soul from bliss, nor keep thee here in pain ;
 Nor should thy fellow-saints e'er know
 Of thy escape below .
 Before thou'rt missed, thou shouldst return again.

Sure, Heaven must needs thy love
 As well as other qualities improve !
 Come then, and recreate my sight
 With rays of thy pure light .
 'Twill cheer my eyes more than the lamps above.

But if Fate's so severe
 As to confine thee to thy blissful sphere,
 (And by thy absence I shall know
 Whether thy state be so),
 Live happy . but be mindful of me there.

MATTHEW PRIOR

LVII

TO A CHILD OF QUALITY, FIVE YEARS OLD

Lords, knights and squires, the numerous band
 That wear the fair Miss Mary's fetters,
 Were summoned by her high command
 To show their passions by their letters.

My pen amongst the rest I took,
 Lest those bright eyes, that cannot read,
 Should dart their kindling fires, and look
 The power they have to be obeyed
 Nor quality, nor reputation,
 Forbids me yet my flame to tell ,
 Dear Five-years-old befriends my passion,
 And I may write till she can spell
 For while she makes her silkworms' beds
 With all the tender things I swear ,
 Whilst all the house my passion reads
 In papers round her baby's hair ,
 She may receive and own my flame ,
 For, though the strictest prudes should know it,
 She'll pass for a most virtuous dame,
 And I for an unhappy poet
 Then too, alas ! when she shall tear
 The lines some younger rival sends ,
 She'll give me leave to write, I fear,
 And we shall still continue friends
 For, as our different ages move,
 'Tis so ordained (would Fate but mend it !)
 That I shall be past making love,
 When she begins to comprehend it

AMBROSE PHILIPS

LVIII

TO CHARLOTTE PULTENEY

Timely blossom, Infant fair,
 Fondling of a happy pair,
 Every morn and every night
 Their solicitous delight,
 Sleeping, waking, still at ease,
 Pleasing, without skill to please ,

Little gossip, blithe and hale,
 Tatling many a broken tale,
 Singing many a tuneless song,
 Lavish of a heedless tongue ,
 Simple maiden, void of art,
 Babbling out the very heart,
 Yet abandoned to thy will,
 Yet imagining nō ill,
 Yet too innocent to blush ,
 Like the linnet in the bush
 To the mother-linnet's note
 Moduling her slender throat ,
 Chirping forth thy petty joys,
 Wanton in the change of toys,
 Like the linnet green, in May
 Flitting to each bloomy spray ,
 Wearied then and glad of rest,
 Like the linnet in the nest —
 This thy present happy lot,
 This, in time will be forgot
 Other pleasures, other cares,
 Ever-busy Time prepares ,
 And thou shalt in thy daughter see,
 This picture, once, resembled thee

COLLEY CIBBER

LIX

THE BLIND BOY

Oh, say what is that thing called light
 Which I can ne'er enjoy ?
 What is the blessing of the sight ?
 Oh, tell your poor blind boy.

You talk of wondrous things you see,
 You say ' The sun shines bright ' ,
 I feel him warm , but how can he
 Or make it day or night ?

My day or night myself I make
 Whene'er I sleep or play ,
 And could I ever keep awake
 It would be always day
 With heavy sighs I often hear
 You mourn my hopeless woe
 But sure with patience I may bear
 A loss I ne'er can know
 Then let not what I cannot have
 My cheer of mind destroy
 While thus I sing, I am a king,
 Although a poor blind boy !

ISAAC WATTS

LX

A CRADLE HYMN

Hush ! my dear, lie still and slumber,
 Holy angels guard thy bed !
 Heavenly blessings without number
 Gently falling on thy head.
 Sleep, my babe , thy food and raiment,
 House and home, thy friends provide ,
 All without thy care or payment
 All thy wants are well supplied
 How much better thou'rt attended
 Than the Son of God could be,
 When from Heaven He descended
 And became a child like thee !
 Soft and easy is thy cradle
 Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay,
 When His birthplace was a stable
 And His softest bed was hay . . .
 See the kinder shepherds round Him,
 Telling wonders from the sky !

Where they sought Him, there they found
 Him,
 With His Virgin-Mother by
 See the lovely Babe a-dressing ,
 Lovely infant, how He smiled !
 When He wept, the Mother's blessing
 Soothed and hushed the holy Child;
 Lo, He slumbers in His manger,
 Where the hornèd oxen fed ,
 —Peace, my darling , her^s no danger ,
 Here's no ox anear thy bed !
 'Twas to save thee, child, from dying,
 Save my dear from burning flame,
 Bitter groans and endless crying,
 That thy blest Redeemer came
 May'st thou live to know and fear Him,
 Trust and love Him all thy days ,
 Then go dwell for ever near Him,
 See His face, and sing His praise !
 I could give thee thousand kisses,
 Hoping what I most desire ,
 Not a mother's fondest wishes
 Can to greater joys aspire

JOHN BYROM

LXI

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

*(Composed in 1745 as a carol for his little daughter
 Dolly, 'for her and for no one else')*

Christians awake ! salute the happy morn,
 Whereon the Saviour of the world was born.
 Rise to adore the mystery of love,
 Which hosts of angels chanted from above
 With them the joyful tidings first begun
 Of God Incarnate and the Virgin's Son

Then to the watchful shepherds it was told,
 Who heard the angelic herald's voice, ' Behold,
 I bring good tidings of a Saviour's birth
 To you and all the nations upon earth
 This day hath God fulfilled His promised Word,
 This day is born a Saviour, Christ the Lord
 In David's city, shepherds, ye shall find
 The long foretold Redeemer of mankind
 Wrapt up in swaddling clothes the Babe Divine
 Lies in a manger,—this shall be the sign '
 He spake, and straightway the celestial choir,
 In hymns of joy unknown before, conspire ,
 The praises of redeeming love they sung,
 And Heaven's whole orb with Hallelujahs rung
 ' God's Highest Glory ' was their anthem still,
 ' Peace upon earth and mutual good will '
 To Bethlehem straight the enlighten'd shepherds
 ran

To see the wonder God had wrought for man ,
 And found with Joseph and the blessed Maid
 Her Son, the Saviour, in a manger laid
 Amaz'd, the wondrous story they proclaim,
 The first apostles of His infant fame ,
 While Mary keeps, and ponders in her heart
 The heav'nly vision which the swains impart
 They to their flocks, still praising God, return,
 And their glad hearts within their bosoms burn

Let us, like these good shepherds, then employ
 Our grateful voices to proclaim the joy .
 Like Mary, let us ponder in our mind
 God's wondrous love in saving lost mankind ,
 Artless and watchful, as these favoured swains,
 While virgin meekness in the heart remains,
 Trace we the Babe, who has retrieved our loss,
 From His poor manger to His bitter Cross,
 Treading His steps, assisted by His grace,
 Till man's first heavenly state again takes
 place

Then may we hope, th' Angelic thrones among,
 To sing, redeemed, a glad triumphant song

He that was born upon this joyful day,
 Around us all His glory shall display
 Saved by His love, incessant we shall sing
 Of angels, and of angel-men, the King.

CHARLES WESLEY.

LXII

FOR A CHILD

Lamb of God, I look to Thee ,
 Thou shalt my example be ,
 Thou art gentle, meek, and mild ,
 Thou wast once a little child

Thou didst live to God alone ,
 Thou didst never seek Thine own ,
 Thou Thyself didst never please ,
 God was all Thy happiness

Loving Jesu, gentle Lamb,
 In Thy gracious hands I am ,
 Make me, Saviour, what Thou art !
 Live Thyself within my heart !

I shall then show forth Thy praise ,
 Serve Thee all my happy days ,
 Then the world shall always see
 Christ, the Holy Child, in me

WILLIAM WHITEHEAD

LXIII

THE FOURTH BIRTHDAY

Old creeping time, with silent tread,
 Has stol'n four years o'er Molly's head ;
 The rosebud opens on her cheek,
 The meaning eyes begin to speak ;

And in each smiling look is seen
 The innocence which plays within
 Nor is the faltering tongue confined
 To hsp the dawning of the mind,
 But firm and full her words convey
 The little all they have to say.

THOMAS GRAY

LXIV

*ODE ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF
 ETON COLLEGE*

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
 That crown the wat'ry glade,
 Where grateful Science still adores
 Her Henry's holy shade,
 And ye, that from the stately brow
 Of Windsor's heights th' expanse below
 Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
 Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
 Wanders the hoary Thames along
 His silver-winding way ·

Ah happy hills ! ah pleasing shade !
 Ah fields beloved in vain !
 Where once my careless childhood strayed,
 A stranger yet to pain !
 I feel the gales, that from ye blow,
 A momentary bliss bestow,
 As waving fresh their gladsome wing
 My weary soul they seem to soothe,
 And, redolent of joy and youth,
 To breathe a second spring

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
 Full many a sprightly race
 Disporting on thy margin green
 The paths of pleasure trace,
 Who foremost now delight to cleave

With pliant arm thy glassy wave ?
 The captive linnet which enthrall ?
 What idle progeny succeed
 To chase the rolling circle's speed,
 Or urge the flying ball ?

While some on earnest business bent
 Their murmuring labours ply
 'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint
 To sweeten liberty ,
 Some bold adventurers disdain
 The limits of their little reign,
 And unknown regions dare descry :
 Still as they run they look behind,
 They hear a voice in every wind,
 And snatch a fearful joy

Gay Hope is theirs by fancy red,
 Less pleasing when possess'd ,
 The tear forgot as soon as shed,
 The sunshine of the breast ,
 Theirs buxom Health, of rosy hue,
 Wild Wit, Invention ever-new,
 And lively Cheer, of Vigour born ;
 The thoughtless day, the easy night,
 The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
 That fly th' approach of morn

Alas, regardless of their doom,
 The little victims play !
 No sense have they of ills to come,
 Nor care beyond to-day ;

Yet ah ! why should they know their fate,
 Since sorrow never comes too late,
 And happiness too swiftly flies ?
 Thought would destroy their paradise.
 No more,—where ignorance is bliss,
 'Tis folly to be wise

LXV

EPITAPH ON A CHILD

Here freed from pain, secure from misery, lies
 A Child, the darling of his parents' eyes,
 A gentler lamb ne'er sported on the plain,
 A fairer flower will never bloom again!
 Few were the days allotted to his breath,
 Here let him sleep in peace his night of death.

WILLIAM COWPER

LXVI

ON THE RECLIP OF MY MOTHER'S
 PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK

My mother! when I learn'd that thou wast
 dead,
 Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
 Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
 Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
 Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unseen, a kiss,
 Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
 Ah, that maternal smile! it answers—Yes
 I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,
 I saw the hearse, that bore thee slow away,
 And, turning from my nurs'ry window, drew
 A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
 But was it such?—It was—Where thou art gone
 Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown
 May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
 The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
 Thy maidens, griev'd themselves at my concern,
 Oft gav'e me promise of thy quick return
 What ardently I wish'd, I long believ'd,
 And, disappointed still, was still deceiv'd.
 By expectation every day beguil'd,
 Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child

Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
 Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
 I learn'd at last submission to my lot,
 But, though I less deplor'd thee, ne'er forgot.

Where once we dwelt our name is heard no
 more,

Children not thine have trod my nursery floor,
 And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
 Drew me to school along the public way,
 Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapp'd
 In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet cap,
 'Tis now become a history little known,
 That once we call'd the pastoral house our own.
 Shortliv'd possession ! but the record fair,
 That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
 Still outlives many a storm, that has effac'd
 A thousand other themes less deeply trac'd,
 Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
 That thou might'st know me safe and warmly
 laid ;

Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
 The biscuit, or confectionary plum,
 The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestow'd
 By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and
 glow'd ,

All this, and more endearing still than all,
 Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
 Ne'er roughen'd by those cataracts and breaks,
 That humour interpos'd too often makes ,
 All this still legible in memory's page,
 All still to be so to my latest age,
 Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
 Such honours to thee as my numbers may ,
 Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
 Not scorn'd in Heav'n, though little notic'd here.

Could Time, his flight revers'd, restore the
 hours,

When, playing with thy vesture's tissu'd flow'rs,
 The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
 I prick'd them into paper with a pin,

(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head, and
smile)

Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them
here ?

I would not trust my heart—the dear delight
Seems so to be desir'd, perhaps I might—
But no—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be lov'd, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again

LXVII

BUNYAN'S PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

O thou, whom, borne on fancy's eager wing
Back to the season of life's happy spring,
I pleas'd remember, and, while memory yet
Holds fast her office here, can ne'er forget,
Ingenious dreamer, in whose well-told tale
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail;
Whose hum'rous vein, strong sense, and simple
style

May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile,
Witty, and well employ'd, and, like thy Lord,
Speaking in parables His slighted word,
I name thee not, lest so despis'd a name
Should move a sneer at thy deserv'd fame,
'Yea, ev'n in transitory life's late day,
That mingles all my brown with sober gray,
Revere the man, whose PILGRIM marks the road,
And guides the PROGRESS of the soul to God
'Twere well with most, if books, that could
engage

Their childhood, pleas'd them at a riper age;
The man, approving what had charm'd the boy,
Would die at last in comfort, peace, and joy.

LXVIII

THE PLAYGROUND

Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise,
We love the play-place of our early days ,
The scene is touching, and the heart is stone
That feels not at that sight, and feels at none
The wall on which we tried our graving skill,
The very name we carved subsisting still ,
The bench on which we sat while deep employ'd,
Though mangled, hack'd, and hew'd, not yet
destroy'd ,
The little ones unbutton'd, glowing hot,
Playing our games, and on the very spot ,
As happy as we once, to kneel and draw
The chalky ring, and knuckle down at taw
To pitch the ball into the grounded hat,
Or drive it devious with a dexterous pat ,
The pleasing spectacle at once excites
Such recollection of our own delights,
That, viewing it, we seem almost t' obtain
Our innocent sweet simple years again

GEORGE CRABBE

LXIX

FIRST GRIEF

Yes ! looking back as early as I can,
I see the griefs that seize their subject Man,
That in the weeping Child their early reign
began .
Yes ! though Pain softens, and is absent since,
He still controls me like my lawful prince.
Joys I remember, like phosphoric light
Or squibs and crackers on a gala night
Joys are like oil ; if thrown upon the tide
Of flowing life, they mix not, nor subside .

Griefs are like waters on the river thrown,
 They mix entirely, and become its own
 Of all the good that grew of early date,
 I can but parts and incidents relate
 A guest arriving, or a borrow'd day
 From school, or schoolboy triumph at some play
 And these from Pain may be deduced, for these
 Removed some ill, and hence their power to
 please

But it was Misery stung me in the day
 Death of an infant sister made a prey,
 For then first met and moved my early fears,
 A father's terrors, and a mother's tears
 Though greater anguish I have since endured,—
 Some heal'd in part, some never to be cured,
 Yet was there something in that first-born ill,
 So new, so strange, that memory feels it still!

THAT my first grief but oh! in after years
 Were other deaths, that call'd for other tears
 But here I dwell not—let me while I can,
 Go to the Child, and lose the suffering Man

WILLIAM BLAKE

LXX

THE PIPER

Piping down the valleys wild,
 Piping songs of pleasant glee,
 On a cloud I saw a child,
 And he laughing said to me:—

'Pipe a song about a Lamb!'
 So I piped with merry cheer,
 'Piper, pipe that song again,'
 So I piped: he wept to hear

'Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe,
 Sing thy songs of happy cheer'

So I sang the same again,
 While he wept with joy to hear
 ' Piper, sit thee down and write
 In a book, that all may read '
 So he vanished from my sight,
 And I pluck'd a hollow reed,
 And I made a rural pen,
 And I stain'd the water clear,
 And I wrote my happy songs
 Every child may joy to hear.

LXXI

INFANT JOY

' I have no name
 I am but two days old '
 What shall I call thee ?
 ' I happy am,
 Joy is my name '
 Sweet joy befall thee !
 Pretty Joy !
 Sweet Joy, but two days old
 Sweet Joy I call thee
 Thou dost smile,
 I sing the while,
 Sweet joy befall thee !

LXXII

CRADLE SONG

Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,
 Dreaming in the joys of night :
 Sleep, sleep, in thy sleep
 Little sorrows sit and weep
 Sweet babe, in thy face
 Soft desires I can trace,

Secret joys and secret smiles,
Little pretty infant wiles

As thy softest limbs I feel
Smiles as of the morning steal
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast
Where thy little heart doth rest

O the cunning wiles that creep
In thy little heart asleep !
When thy little heart doth wake,
Then the dreadful night shall break.

LXXIII

CRADLE SONG

Sweet dreams, form a shade
O'er my lovely infant's head ,
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams
By happy, silent, moony beams

Sweet sleep, with soft down
Weave thy brows an infant crown
Sweet sleep, Angel mild,
Hover o'er my happy child

Sweet smiles, in the night
Hover over my delight ;
Sweet smiles, mother's smiles,
All the livelong night beguiles.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,
Chase not slumber from thy eyes.
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles,
All the dovelike moans beguiles

Sleep, sleep, happy child,
All creation slept and smil'd ,
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,
While o'er thee thy mother weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
Holy image I can trace.

Sweet babe, once like thee,
Thy Maker lay and wept for me,

Wept for me, for thee, for all
When He was an infant small
Thou His image ever see,
Heavenly face that smiles on thee,

Smiles on thee, on me, on all,
Who became an infant small
Infant smiles are His own smiles;
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.

LXXIV

NURSE'S SONG

When the voices of children are heard on the
 . green,
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast,
And everything else is still

‘ Then come home, my children, the sun is gone
 down,
And the dews of night arise,
Come, come, leave off play, and let us away
Till the morning appears in the skies.’

‘ No, no, let us play, for it is yet day,
And we cannot go to sleep,
Besides, in the sky the little birds fly,
And the hills are all cover’d with sheep ’

‘ Well, well, go and play till the light fades away,
And then go home to bed ’
The little ones leapèd and shouted and laugh’d
And all the hills echoèd

LXXV

THE LITTLE BLACK BOY

My mother bore me in the southern wild,
 And I am black, but O ! my soul is white ,
 White as an angel is the English child,
 But I am black, as n bereav'd of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree,
 And, sitting down before the heat of day,
 She took me on her lap and kissèd me,
 And, pointing to the east, began to say .

' Look on the rising sun,—there God does live,
 And gives His light, and gives His heat away ,
 And flowers and trees and beasts and men
 receive
 Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday

' And we are put on earth a little space,
 That we may learn to bear the beams of love ;
 And these black bodies and this sunburnt face
 Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

' For when our souls have learn'd the heat to
 bear,
 The cloud will vanish ; we shall hear His voice,
 Saying " Come out from the grove, My love
 and care,
 And round My golden tent like lambs rejoice." '

Thus did my mother say, and kissèd me ,
 And thus I say to little English boy.
 When I from black and he from white cloud
 free,
 And round the tent of God like lambs we joy,

I'll shade him from the heat, till he can bear
 To lean in joy upon our Father's knee ;
 And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
 And be like him, and he will then love me.

LXXVI

*HOLY THURSDAY**(In Songs of Innocence)*

'Twas on a Holy Thursday, their innocent faces
clean,
The children walking two and two, in red and
blue and green
Grey-headed beadles walk'd before, with wands as
white as snow,
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like
Thames' waters flow

O what a multitude they seem'd, these flowers of
London town !
Seated in companies they sit with radiance all
their own.
The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes
of lambs,
Thousands of little boys and girls raising their
innocent hands

Now like a mighty wind they raise to Heaven the
voice of song,
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of
Heaven among
Beneath them sit the agèd men, wise guardians of
the poor ,
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from
your door.

LXXVII

*HOLY THURSDAY**(In Songs of Experience)*

Is this a holy thing to see
In a rich and fruitful land,
Babes reduc'd to misery,
Fed with cold and usurous hand ?

Is that trembling cry a song ?
 Can it be a song of joy ?
 And so many children poor ?
 It is a land of poverty !

And their sun does never shine,
 And their fields are bleak and bare,
 And their ways are fill'd with thorns .
 It is eternal winter there

For where'er the sun does shine,
 And where'er the rain does fall,
 Babe can never hunger there,
 Nor poverty the mind appal.

, LXXVIII

THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER

When my mother died I was very young,
 And my father sold me while yet my tongue
 Could scarcely cry 'weep ! 'weep ! 'weep !
 'weep !'

So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep
 There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his
 head,
 That curl'd like a lamb's back, was shav'd . so
 I said,
 ' Hush, Tom ! never mind it, for when your
 head's bare
 You know that the soot cannot spoil your white
 hair '

And so he was quiet, and that very night,
 As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight !—
 That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and
 Jack,
 Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black.

And by came an Angel who had a bright key,
 And he opened the coffins and set them all free ;

Then down a green plain leaping, laughing, they
 run,

And wash in a river, and shine in the sun

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,
 They rise upon clouds and sport in the wind,
 And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
 He'd have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke, and we rose in the dark,
 And got with our bags and our brushes to work.
 Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy and
 warm,

So if all do their duty they need not fear harm.

ROBERT BURNS

LXXIX

THE COTTER'S HOME-COMING

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
 Beneath the shelter of an aged tree ;
 Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin, stacher thro'
 To meet their Dad, wi' flichterin noise an' glee.
 His wee bit ingle, blinking bonnily,
 His clean hearthstane, his thriftie wife's smile,
 The lispin infant prattling on his knee,
 Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,
 An' makes him quite forget his labour an' his
 toil

SAMUEL ROGERS

LXXX

MEMORIES OF HIS CHILDHOOD'S HOME

Now stained with dews, with cobwebs darkly hung,
 Oft has its roof with peals of rapture rung ;
 When round yon ample board, in due degree,

We sweetened every meal with social glee
 The heart's light laugh pursued the circling jest ,
 And all was sunshine in each little breast
 'Twas here we chased the slipper by the sound ,
 And turned the blindfold hero round and round
 'Twas here, at eve, we formed our fairy ring ,
 And Fancy fluttered on her wildest wing
 Giants and genii chained each wondering ear ,
 And orphan-sorrows drew the ready tear
 Oft with the babes we wandered in the wood,
 Or viewed the forest-feats of Robin Hood
 Oft fancy-led, at midnight's fearful hour,
 With startling step we scaled the lonely tower ,
 O'er infant innocence to hang and weep,
 Murdered by ruffian hands, when smiling in its
 sleep

Ye household deities ! whose guardian eye
 Mark'd each pure thought, ere registered on high ;
 Still, still ye walk the consecrated ground,
 And breathe the soul of Inspiration round

MARY LAMB

LXXXI

IN MEMORIAM

A child's a plaything for an hour ,
 Its pretty tricks we try
 For that or for a longer space ,—
 Then tire, and lay it by

But I know one that to itself
 All seasons could control ,
 That would have mock'd the sense of pain
 Out of a grievèd soul

Thou straggler into loving arms,
 Young climber-up of knees,
 When I forget thy thousand ways
 Then life and all shall cease !

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD

LXXXII

THE BLIND CHILD

Where's the blind child, so admirably fair,
 With guileless dimples, and with flaxen hair
 That waves in every breeze ? He's often seen
 Beside yon cottage wall, or on the green,
 With others matched in spirit and in size,
 Health on their cheeks and rapture in their
 eyes

That full expanse of voice to childhood dear,
 Soul of their sports, is duly cherished here
 And hark, that laugh is his, tha' jovial cry,
 He hears the ball and trundling hoop brush by,
 And runs the giddy course with all his might,
 A very child in everything but sight,
 With circumscribed, but not abated powers,
 Play, the great object of his infant hours
 In many a game he takes a noisy part,
 And shows the native gladness of his heart,
 But soon he hears, on pleasure all intent,
 The new suggestion and the quick assent,
 The grove invites, delight thrills every breast—
 To leap the ditch, and seek the downy nest,
 Away they start, leave balls and hoops behind,
 And one companion leave—the boy is blind !
 His fancy paints their distant paths so gay,
 That childish fortitude awhile gives way :
 He feels his dreadful loss ; yet short the pain,
 Soon he resumes his cheerfulness again,
 Pondering how best his moments to employ
 He sings his little songs of nameless joy,
 Creeps on the warm green turf for many an hour,
 And plucks by chance the white and yellow
 flower,
 Smoothing their stems while, resting on his knees,
 He binds a nosegay which he never sees,

Along the homeward path then feels his way,
 Lifting his brow against the shining day,
 And with a playful rapture round his eyes
 Presents a sighing parent with the prize.

JAMES HOGG

LXXXIII

1 *BOY'S SONG*

Where the pools are bright and deep,
 Where the grey trout lies asleep,
 Up the river and over the lea,
 That's the way for Billy and me

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
 Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
 Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
 That's the way for Billy and me

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
 Where the hay lies thick and greenest,
 There to track the homeward bee,
 That's the way for Billy and me

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
 Where the shadow falls the deepest,
 Where the clustering nuts fall free,
 That's the way for Billy and me

Why the boys should drive away
 Little sweet maidens from the play,
 Or love to banter and fight so well,
 That's the thing I never could tell

But this I know, I love to play,
 Through the meadow, among the hay ;
 Up the water and over the lea,
 That's the way for Billy and me

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LXXXIV

*CHARACTER OF A CHILD THREE
YEARS OLD*

Loving she is, and tractable, though wild ,
 And Innocence hath privilege in her
 To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes ,
 And feats of cunning , and the pretty round
 Of trespasses, affected to provoke
 Mock-chastisement and partnership in play.
 And, as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,
 Not less if unattended and alone
 Than when both young and old sit gathered
 round

And take delight in its activity ,
 Even so this happy Creature of herself
 Is all-sufficient, solitude to her
 Is blithe society, who fills the air
 With gladness and involuntary songs
 Light are her sallies as the tripping fawn's
 Forth-startled from the fern where she lay
 couched ,
 Unthought-of, unexpected, as the stir
 Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow-flowers,
 Or from before it chasing wantonly
 The many-coloured images imprest
 Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

LXXXV

*LUCY GRAY**or, Solitude*

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray :
 And, when I crossed the wild,
 I chanced to see at break of day
 The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew ,
 She dwelt on a wide moor,
 —The sweetest thing that ever grew
 Beside a human door !

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
 The hare upon the green ,
 But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
 Will never more be seen

' To-night will be a stormy night—
 You to the town must go ,
 And take a lantern, Child, to light
 Your mother through the snow '

' That, Father ! will I gladly do
 'Tis scarcely afternoon—
 The minster-clock has just struck two,
 And yonder is the moon ! '

At this the Father raised his hook,
 And snapped a faggot-band ,
 He plied his work ,—and Lucy took
 The lantern in her hand

Not blither is the mountain roe
 With many a wanton stroke
 Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
 That rises up like smoke

The storm came on before its time
 She wandered up and down ,
 And many a hill did Lucy climb
 But never reached the town

The wret hed parents all that night
 Went shouting far and wide ,
 But there was neither sound nor sight
 To serve them for a guide

At day-break on a hill they stood
 That overlooked the moor ,
 And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
 A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried,
' In heaven we all shall meet , '
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge
They tracked the footmarks small ,
And through the bro^l-en hawthorn hedge,
And by the long stone-wall ,

And then an open field they crossed :
The marks were still the same ,
They tracked them on, nor ever lost ,
And to the bridge they came

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank ,
And further there were none !

—Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child ,
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind ,
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

LXXXVI

WE ARE SEVEN

——— A simple Child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death ?

I met a little cottage Girl ·
She was eight years old, she said ;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head

She had a rustic, woodland air,
 And she was wildly clad .
 Her eyes were fair, and very fair ,
 —Her beauty made me glad

‘ Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
 How many may you be ? ’
 ‘ How many ? ’ Seven in all,’ she said
 And wondering looked at me

‘ And where are they ? I pray you tell ’
 She answered, ‘ Seven are we ,
 And two of us at Conway dwell.
 And two are gone to sea

‘ Two of us in the church-yard lie,
 My sister and my brother ,
 And, in the church-yard cottage, I
 Dwell near them with my mother ’

‘ You say that two at Conway dwell,
 And two are gone to sea,
 Yet ye are seven !—I pray you tell,
 Sweet Maid, how this may be ’

Then did the little Maid reply,
 ‘ Seven boys and girls are we ,
 Two of us in the church-yard lie,
 Beneath the church-yard tree ’

‘ You run about, my little Maid,
 Your limbs they are alive ,
 If two are in the church-yard laid,
 Then ye are only five ’

‘ Their graves are green they may be seen,
 The little Maid replied,
 ‘ Twelve steps or more from my mother’s door,
 And they are side by side

‘ My stockings there I often knit,
 My kerchief there I hem ,
 And there upon the ground I sit,
 And sing a song to them.

' And often after sunset, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there

' The first that died was sister Jane ,
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain ,
And then she went away

' So in the church-yard she was laid ,
And, when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I

' And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side '

' How many are you, then,' said I,
' If they two are in heaven ? '
Quick was the little Maid's reply,
' O Master ! we are seven '

' But they are dead ; those two are dead !
Their spirits are in heaven ! '
'Twas throwing words away ; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, ' Nay, we are seven ! '

LXXXVII

TO H(ARTLEY) C(OLERIDGE)
Six Years Old

O thou ! whose fancies from afar are brought ,
Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
And fittest to unutterable thought
The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol ;
Thou faery voyager ! that dost float
In such clear water, that thy boat

May rather seem !
 To brood on air than on an earthly stream ,
 Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
 Where earth and heaven do make one imagery
 O blessed vision ! happy child !
 Thou art so exquisitely wild,
 I think of thee with many fears
 For what may be thy lot in future years
 I thought of times when Pain might be thy
 guest,
 Lord of thy house and hospitality ,
 And Grief, uneasy lover ! never rest
 But when she sate within the touch of thee
 O too industrious folly !
 O vain and causeless melancholy !
 Nature will either end thee quite ,
 Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
 Preserve for thee, by individual right,
 A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.
 What hast thou to do with sorrow,
 Or the injuries of to-morrow ?
 Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn brings
 forth,
 Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,
 Or to be trailed along the soiling earth ,
 A gem that glitters while it lives,
 And no forewarning gives ,
 But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife
 Slips in a moment out of life.

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LXXXVIII

THE CHILD AND THE SHELL

 I have seen
 A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
 Of inland ground, applying to his ear
 The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell ;
 To which, in silence hushed, his very soul
 Listened intensely ; and his countenance soon
 Brightened with joy , for from within were heard

Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed
Mysterious union with its native sea
Even such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of Faith.

LXXXIX

THE KITTEN AND FALLING LEAVES

That way look, my Infant, lo !
What a pretty baby-show !
See the Kitten on the wall,
Sporting with the leaves that fall,
Withered leaves—one—two—and three—
From the lofty elder-tree !
Through the calm and frosty air
Of this morning bright and fair,
Eddying round and round they sink
Softly, slowly one might think,
From the motions that are made,
Every little leaf conveyed
Sylph or Faery hither tending,—
To this lower world descending,
Each invisible and mute,
In his wavering parachute

Such a light of gladness breaks,
Pretty Kitten ! from thy freaks,—
Spreads with such a living grace
O'er my little Dora's face ,
Yes, the sight so stirs and charms
Thee, Baby, laughing in my arms,
That almost I could repine
That your transports are not mine,
That I do not wholly fare
Even as ye do, thoughtless pair !
And I will have my careless season,
Spite of melancholy reason,
Will walk through life in such a way
That, when time brings on decay,
Now and then I may possess

Hours of perfect gladsomeness
 — Pleased by any random toy ,
 By a kitten's busy joy,
 Or an infant's laughing eye
 Sharing in the ecstasy ,
 I would fare like that or this,
 Find my wisdom in my bliss ,
 Keep the sprightly soul awake,
 And have faculties to take,
 Even from things by sorrow wrought,
 Matter for a jocund thought,
 Spite of care, and spite of grief,
 To gambol with Life's falling leaf

xc

THERE WAS A BOY

There was a Boy ye knew him well, ye cliffs
 And islands of Winander !—many a time
 At evening, when the earliest stars began
 To move along the edges of the hills,
 Rising or setting, would he stand alone
 Beneath the trees or by the glimmering lake ,
 And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
 Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth
 Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
 Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
 That they might answer him —And they would
 shout

Across the watery vale, and shout again,
 Responsive to his call—with quivering peals,
 And long halloos and screams, and echoes loud,
 Redoubled and redoubled, concourse wild
 Of jocund din ! And, when there came a pause
 Of silence such as baffled his best skill
 Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung
 Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
 Has carried far into his heart the voice
 Of mountain torrents , or the visible scene
 Would enter unawares into his mind,

With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
 Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received
 Into the bosom of the steady lake

This boy was taken from his mates, and died
 In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.
 Pie-eminent in beauty is the vale
 Where he was born and bred the church-yard
 hangs
 Upon a slope above the village school,
 And, through that church-yard when my way
 has led
 On summer evenings, I believe, that there
 A long half-hour together I have stood
 Mute—looking at the grave in which he lies !

XCI

THE BOY IN THE MILL

The boy, where'er he turns,
 Is still a prisoner ; when the wind is up
 Among the clouds, and roars through the ancient
 woods ;
 Or when the sun is shining in the east,
 Quiet and calm Behold him—in the school ;
 Of his attainments ? no, but with the air
 Fanning his temples under heaven's blue arch.
 His raiment, whitened o'er with cotton-flakes
 Or locks of wool, announces whence he comes
 Creeping his gait and cowering, his lip pale,
 His respiration quick and audible,
 And scarcely could you fancy that a gleam
 Could break from out those languid eyes, or a
 blush
 Mantle upon his cheek. Is this the form,
 Is that the countenance, and such the port,
 Of no mean Being ? One who should be clothed
 With dignity befitting his proud hope,
 Who, in his very childhood, should appear
 Sublime from present purity and joy !

The limbs increase , but liberty of mind
 Is gone for ever , and this organic frame,
 So joyful in its motions, is become
 Dull, to the joy of her own motions dead ,
 And even the touch, so exquisitely poured
 Through the whole body, with a languid will
 Performs its functions , rarely competent
 To impress a vivid feeling on the mind
 Of what there is delightful in the breeze,
 The gentle visitations of the sun,
 Or lapse of liquid element—by hand,
 Or foot, or lip, in summer's warmth—perceived
 —Can hope look forward to a manhood raised
 On such foundations ?

XCII

THE EDUCATION OF NATURE

Three years she grew in sun and shower,
 Then Nature said, ' A lovelier flower
 On earth was never sown ,
 This Child I to myself will take ,
 She shall be mine, and I will make
 A Lady of my own.

' Myself will to my darling be
 Both law and impulse and with me
 The Girl, in rock and plain,
 In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
 Shall feel an overseeing power
 To kindle or restrain

' She shall be sportive as the fawn
 That wild with glee across the lawn,
 Or up the mountain springs ,
 And hers shall be the breathing balm,
 And hers the silence and the calm
 Of mute insensate things

' The floating clouds their state shall lend
 To her , for her the willow bend ,

Nor shall she fail to see
 Even in the motions of the Storm
 Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form
 By silent sympathy

' The stars of midnight shall be dear
 To her , and she shall lean her ear
 In many a secret place
 Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
 And beauty born of murmuring sound
 Shall pass into her face

' And vital feelings of delight
 Shall rear her form to stately height,
 Her virgin bosom swell ,
 Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
 While she and I together live
 Here in this happy dell '

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
 How soon my Lucy's race was run !
 She died, and left to me
 This heath, this calm, and quiet scene ;
 The memory of what has been,
 And never more will be

XCIII

*IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING,
 CALM AND FREE*

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
 The holy time is quiet as a Nun
 Breathless with adoration , the broad sun
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity ,
 The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea :
 Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,
 And doth with his eternal motion make
 A sound like thunder—everlastingly
 Dear Child ! dear Girl ! that walkest with me
 here,
 If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,

Thy nature is not therefore less divine :
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;
 And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it not.

XCIV

CATECHISING

From Little down to Least, in due degree,
 Around the Pastor, each in new-wrought vest,
 Each with a vernal posy at his breast,
 We stood, a trembling, earnest Company !
 With low soft murmur, like a distant bee,
 Some spake, by thought-perplexing fears be-
 trayed ,
 And some a bold unerring answer made .
 How fluttered then thy anxious heart for me,
 Belovèd Mother ! Thou whose happy hand
 Had bound the flowers I wore, with faithful tie :
 Sweet flowers ! at whose inaudible command
 Her countenance, phantom-like, doth reappear :
 O lost too early for the frequent tear,
 And ill requited by this heartfelt sigh !

XCV

*SURPRISED BY JOY—IMPATIENT
 AS THE WIND*

Surprised by joy—impatient as the Wind
 I turned to hare the transport—Oh ! with
 whom
 But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,
 That spot which no vicissitude can find ?
 Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind—
 But how could I forget thee ? Through what
 power,
 Even for the least division of an hour,
 Have I been so beguiled as to be blind

To my most grievous loss ?—That thought's
return

Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more,
That neither present time, nor years unborn
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore

XCVI

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS.

We walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun,
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,
' The will of God be done ! '

A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering grey,
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday

And on that morning, through the grass,
And by the steaming rills,
We travelled merrily, to pass
A day among the hills

' Our work,' said I, ' was well begun,
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought ? '

A second time did Matthew stop ;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply .

' Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

‘ And just above yon slope of corn
Such colours, and no other,
Were in the sky, that April morn,
Of this the very brother

‘ With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And, to the church-yard come, stopped short
Beside my daughter’s grave

‘ Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale,
And then she sang,—she would have been
A very nightingale.

‘ Six feet in earth my Emma lay,
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e’er had loved before

‘ And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the church-yard yew,
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew

‘ A basket on her head she bare,
Her brow was smooth and white.
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight !

‘ No fountain from its rocky cave
E’er tripped with foot so free,
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

‘ There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine,
I looked at her, and looked again:
And did not wish her mine !’

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.

XCVII

*From THE PRELUDE—' FAIR SEED-
TIME HAD MY SOUL '*

I

. . . One, the fairest of all rivers, loved
To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song,
And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,
And from his fords and shallows, sent a voice
That flowed along my dreams For this, didst
thou,
O Derwent ! winding among grassy holms
Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,
Make ceaseless music that composed my thoughts
To more than infant softness, giving me
Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind
A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm
That Nature breathes among the hills and groves.

II

Oh, many a time have I, a five years' child,
In a small mill-race severed from his stream,
Made one long bathing of a summer's day,
Basked in the sun, and plunged and basked again
Alternate, all a summer's day, or scoured
The sandy fields, leaping through flowery groves
Of yellow ragwort, or, when rock and hill,
The woods, and distant Skiddaw's lofty height,
Were bronzed with deepest radiance, stood a'one
Beneath the sky, as if I had been born
On Indian plains, and from my mother's hut
Had run abroad in wantonness, to sport
A naked savage, in the thunder shower.

III

Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew up
Fostered alike by beauty and by fear
Much favoured in my birth-place, and no less
In that beloved Vale to which erelong

We were transplanted¹,—there were we let loose
 For sports of wider range Ere I had told
 Ten birth-days, when among the mountain slopes
 Frost, and the breath of frosty wind, had
 snapped

The last autumnal crocus, 'twas my joy
 With store of springes o'er my shoulder hung
 To rage the open heights where woodcocks run
 Along the smooth green turf Through half the
 night,

Scudding away from snare to snare, I plied
 That anxious visitation,—moon and stars
 Were shining o'er my head I was alone,
 And seemed to be a trouble to the peace
 That dwelt among them Sometimes it befell
 In these night wanderings, that a strong desire
 O'erpowered my better reason, and the bird
 Which was the captive of another's toil
 Became my prey, and when the deed was done
 I heard among the solitary hills
 Low breathings coming after me, and sounds
 Of undistinguishable motion, steps
 Almost as silent as the turf they trod

Nor less, when spring had warmed the cultured
 Vale,

Moved we as plunderers where the mother-bird
 Had in high places built her lodge, though mean
 Our object and inglorious, yet the end
 Was not ignoble Oh! when I have hung
 Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass
 And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock
 But ill sustained, and almost (so it seemed)
 Suspended by the blast that blew amain,
 Shouldering the naked crag, oh, at that time
 While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,
 With what strange utterance did the loud dry
 wind

Blow through my ear! the sky seemed not a sky
 Of earth—and with what motion moved the
 clouds!

IV

One summer evening (led by her) I found
A little boat tied to a willow tree
Within a rocky cave, its usual home.
Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping in
Pushed from the shore. It was an act of stealth
And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on,
Leaving behind her still, on either side,
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who rows,
Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge,
The horizon's utmost boundary, far above
Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.
She was an elfin pinnace, lustily
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
Went heaving through the water like a swan;
When, from behind that craggy steep till then
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge
As if with voluntary power instinct,
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,
And growing still in stature the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars, and still,
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,
And through the silent water stole my way
Back to the covert of the willow tree;
There in her mooring-place I left my bark,—
And through the meadows homeward went, in
grave
And serious mood; but after I had seen
That spectacle, for many days, my brain
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
Of unknown modes of being; o'er my thoughts

There hung a darkness, call it solitude
 Or blank desertion No familiar shapes
 Remained, no pleasant images of trees,
 Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields ;
 But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
 Like living men, moved slowly through the mind
 By day, and were a trouble to my dreams

V

And in the frosty season, when the sun
 Was set, and visible for many a mile
 The cottage windows blazed through twilight
 gloom,
 I heeded not their summons : happy time
 It was indeed for all of us—for me
 It was a time of rapture ! Clear and loud
 The village clock tolled six,—I wheeled about,
 Proud and exulting like an untired horse
 That cares not for his home. All shod with
 steel,
 We hissed along the polished ice in games
 Confederate, imitative of the chase
 And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,
 The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare
 So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
 And not a voice was idle, with the din
 Smitten, the precipices rang aloud ;
 The leafless trees and every icy crag
 Tinkled like iron ; while far distant hills
 Into the tumult sent an alien sound
 Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars
 Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west
 The orange sky of evening died away.
 Not seldom from the uproar I retired
 Into a silent bay, or sportively
 Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,
 To cut across the reflex of a star
 That fled, and, flying still before me, gleamed
 Upon the glassy plain, and oftentimes,
 When we had given our bodies to the wind,
 And all the shadowy banks on either side

Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning
still

The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
Stopped short, yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
With visible motion her diurnal round !
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep

VI

Yes, I remember when the changeful earth,
And twice five summers on my mind had stamped
The faces of the moving year, even then
I held unconscious intercourse with beauty
Old as creation, drinking in a pure
Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths
Of curling mist, or from the level plain
Of waters coloured by impending clouds.

VII

Thus oft amid those fits of vulgar joy
Which, through all seasons, on a child's pursuits
Are prompt attendants, 'mid that giddy bliss
Which, like a tempest, works along the blood
And is forgotten, even then I felt
Gleams like the flashing of a shield ;—the earth
And common face of Nature spake to me
Rememberable things.

xcviii

*ODE ON THE INTIMATIONS OF IM-
MORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS
OF EARLY CHILDHOOD*

I

There was a time when meadow, grove, and
stream,

The earth, and every common sight,
 To me did seem
 Apparelled in celestial light,
 The glory and the freshness of a dream
 It is not now as it hath been of yore,—
 Turn wheresoe'er I may,
 By night or day,
 The things which I have seen I now can see no
 more

II

The Rainbow comes and goes,
 And lovely is the Rose,
 The Moon doth with delight
 Look round her when the heavens are bare,
 Waters on a starry night
 Are beautiful and fair,
 The sunshine is a glorious birth,
 But yet I know, where'er I go,
 That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
 And while the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound,
 To me alone there came a thought of grief,
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong.
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep,
 No more shall grief of mine the season wrong,
 'T hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
 The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
 And all the earth is gay,
 Land and sea
 Give themselves up to jollity,
 And with the heart of May
 Doth every Beast keep holiday;—
 Thou Child of Joy,
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou
 happy
 Shepherd-boy!

IV

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make , I see
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal,
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it 'all
 Oh evil day ! if I were sullen
 While Earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May-morning,
 And the Children are culling
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers , while the sun shines warm,
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm —
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !
 —But there's a Tree, of many, one,
 A single Field which I have looked upon,
 Both of them speak of something that is gone :
 The Pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting .
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
 But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy ,
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east

Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended,
 At length the Man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own,
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely Nurse doth all she can
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
 A six-years' Darling of a pigmy size !
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's eyes !
 See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
 Some fragment from his dream of human life,
 Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art ;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral ;
 And this hath now his heart,
 And unto this he frames his song :
 Then will he fit his tongue
 To dialogues of business, love, or strife,
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
 The little Actor cons another part,
 Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'
 With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
 That Life brings with her in her equipage ;
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy Soul's immensity ,
 Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
 Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
 Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
 Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !
 On whom those truths do rest,
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ,
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality
 Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
 A Presence which is not to be put by ,
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

IX

O joy ! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live,
 That nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive !
 The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benediction not indeed
 For that which is most worthy to be blest—
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his
 breast —
 Not for these I raise
 The song of thanks and praise ,
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,

Fallings from us, vanishings,
 Blank misgivings of a Creature
 Moving about in worlds not realised,
 High instincts before which our mortal Nature
 Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised
 But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,
 Which, be they what they may,
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing,
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to
 make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal Silence truths that wake,
 To perish never,
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
 Nor Man no. Boy,
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy !
 Hence in a season of calm weather
 Though inland far we be,
 Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither,
 Can in a moment travel thither,
 And see the Children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore

X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song !
 And let the young Lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound !
 We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May !
 What though the radiance which was once so
 bright
 Be now for ever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the hour
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower,
 We will grieve not, rather find

Strength in what remains behind ;
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be ,
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering ,
 In the faith that looks through death,
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and
 Groves,
 Forebode not any severing of our loves !
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ,
 I only have relinquished one delight
 To live beneath your more habitual sway
 I love the Brooks which down their channels
 fret,
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;
 The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
 Is lovely yet ;
 The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
 Do take a sober colouring from an eye
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;
 Another race hath been, and other palms are
 won.
 Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

XCIX

*MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN
 I BEHOLD*

My heart leaps up when I behold
 A rainbow in the sky ·
 So was it when my life began ;
 So is it now I am a man ;

So be it when I shall grow old,
 Or let me die !
 The Child is father of the Man ;
 And I could wish my days to be
 Bound each by each by natural piety.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

C

LULLABY OF AN INFANT CHIEF

O, hush thee, my babie, thy sire was a knight,
 Thy mother a lady, both lovely and bright ,
 The woods and the glens, from the towers which
 we see,

They all are belonging, dear babie, to thee

O ho ro, i ri ri, cadul gu lo,

O ho ro, i ri ri, etc

O, fear not the bugle, though loudly it blows,
 It calls but the warders that guard thy repose ,
 Their bows would be bended, their blades would
 be red,

Ere the step of a foeman draws near to thy bed.

O ho ro, i ri ri, etc

O, hush thee, my babie, the time soon will
 come

When thy sleep shall be broken by trumpet and
 drum ;

Then hush thee, my darling, take rest while you
 may,

For strife comes with manhood, and waking
 with day .

O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

CI

NOVEMBER

The sheep, before the pinching heaven,
 To shelter'd dale and down are driven,

G

Where yet some faded herbage pines,
And yet a watery sunbeam shines ;
In meek despondency they eye
The wither'd sward and wintry sky,
And far beneath their summer hill,
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill :
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,
And wraps him closer from the cold ;
His dogs no merry circles wheel,
But, shivering, follow at his heel ;
A cowering glance they often cast,
As deeper moans the gathering blast.

My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild,
As best befits the mountain child,
Feel the sad influence of the hour,
And wail the daisy's vanished flower ,
Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,
And anxious ask,—Will spring return,
And birds and lambs again be gay,
And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray ?

Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower
Again shall paint your summer bower ;
Again the hawthorn shall supply
The garlands you delight to tie ,
The lambs upon the lea shall bound,
The wild birds carol to the round,
And while you frolic light as they,
Too short shall seem the summer day.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

CII

A LITTLE CHILD

A little child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,
A fairy thing with red round cheeks,
That always finds and never seeks,
Makes such a vision to the sight
As fills a father's eyes with light. . . .

CIII

TO THE RIVER OTTER

Dear native brook ! wild streamlet of the West !
 How many various-fated years have passed,
 What happy, and what mournful hours, since last
 I skimmed the smooth thin stone along thy breast,
 Numbering its light leaps ! Yet so deep imprest
 Sink the sweet scenes of childhood, that mine eyes
 I never shut amid the sunny ray,
 But straight with all their tints thy waters rise,
 Thy crossing plank, thy marge with willows gray,
 And bedded sand that, veined with various dyes,
 Gleamed through thy bright transparence On
 my way,
 Visions of childhood ! oft have ye beguiled
 Lone manhood's cares, yet waking fondest sighs :
 Ah ! that once more I were a careless child.

CIV

*LOVE, HOPE, AND PATIENCE IN
EDUCATION*

O'er wayward childhood would'st thou hold firm
 rule,
 And sun thee in the light of happy faces,
 Love, Hope, and Patience, these must be thy
 graces,
 And in thine own heart let them first keep school.
 For as old Atlas on his broad neck places
 Heaven's starry globe, and there sustains it,—so
 Do these upbear the little world below
 Of Education,—Patience, Love, and Hope
 Methinks, I see them group'd in seemly show,
 The straiten'd arms upraised, the palms aslope,
 And robes that, touching as adown they flow,
 Distinctly blend, like snow emboss'd in snow.

O part them never ! If Hope prostrate lie,
 Love too will sink and die
 But Love is subtle, and doth proof derive
 From her own life that Hope is yet alive,
 And bending o'er, with soul-transfusing eyes,
 And the soft murmurs of the mother dove,
 Woos back the fleeting spirit, and half supplies;—
 Thus Love repays to Hope what Hope first gave
 to Love
 Yet haply there will come a weary day,
 When overtask'd at length
 Both Love and Hope beneath the load give way.
 Then with a statue's smile, a statue's strength,
 Stands the mute sister, Patience, nothing loth,
 And both supporting does the work of both.

CV

From 'FROST AT MIDNIGHT'

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
 Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm
 Fill up the interspersèd vacancies
 And momentary pauses of the thought !
 My babe so beautiful ! it thrills my heart
 With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
 And think that thou shalt learn far other lore,
 And in far other scenes ! For I was reared
 In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
 And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
 But *thou*, my babe ! shalt wander like a breeze
 By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
 Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,
 Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
 And mountain crags so shalt thou see and hear
 The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
 Of that eternal language, which thy God
 Utters, who from eternity doth teach
 Himself in all, and all things in Himself.
 Great universal Teacher ! He shall mould
 Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
 Whether the summer clothe the general earth
 With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
 Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
 Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
 Smokes in the sun-thaw, whether the eave-drops
 fall

Heard only in the trances of the blast,
 Or if the secret ministry of frost
 Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
 Quietly shining to 'he quiet Moon.

CVI

TIME, REAL AND IMAGINARY

(*An Allegory*)

On the wide level of a mountain's head,
 (I knew not where, but 'twas some faery place)
 Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails outspread,
 Two lovely children run an endless race,

A sister and a brother !

This far outstript the other ,
 Yet ever runs she with reverted face,
 And looks and listens for the boy behind .

For he, alas ! is blind !

O'er rough and smooth with even step he passed,
 And knows not whether he be first or last

CVII

ON AN INFANT

which died before Baptism

' Be, rather than be call'd, a child of God,'
 Death whisper'd !—with assenting nod,
 Its head upon its mother's breast,

The Baby bow'd, without demur—
 Of the kingdom of the Blest
 Possessor, not inheritor.

ROBERT SOUTHEY

CVIII

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done ,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun,
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,
That he, beside the rivulet,
In playing there, had found ;
He came to ask what he had found,
That was so large, and smooth, and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by ,
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh,
' 'Tis some poor fellow's skull,' said he,
' Who fell in the great victory.

' I find them in the garden, for
There's many here about,
And often when I go to plough,
The ploughshare turns them out ;
For many thousand men,' said he,
' Were slain in the great victory '

' Now tell us what 'twas all about,'
Young Peterkin he cries,
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes ;
' Now tell us all about the war,
And what they kill'd each other for ? '

'It was the English,' Kaspar cried,
 'That put the French to rout ;
 But what they kill'd each other for,
 I could not well make out.
 But everybody said,' quoth he,
 'That 'twas a famous victory.

'My father lived at Blenheim then,
 Yon little stream hard by ,
 They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
 And he was forced to fly .
 So with his wife and child he fled,
 Nor had he where to rest his head.

'With fire and sword the country round
 Was wasted far and wide,
 And many a chiding mother then,
 And new-born infant, died ,—
 But things like that, you know, must be
 At every famous victory.

'They say it was a shocking sight,
 After the field was won,
 For many thousand bodies here
 Lay rotting in the sun ;—
 But things like that, you know, must be,
 After a famous victory.

'Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won,
 And our good Prince Eugene '—
 'Why, 'twas a very wicked thing ! '
 Said little Wilhelmine.—
 'Nay—nay—my little girl,' quoth he,
 'It was a famous victory ! '

'And everybody praised the Duke
 Who such a fight did win '—
 'But what good came of it at last ? '
 Quoth little Peterkin —
 'Why that I cannot tell,' said he,
 'But 'twas a famous victory.'

CHARLES LAMB

CIX

RECOLLECTION

In my poor mind it is most sweet to muse
 Upon the days gone by , to act in thought
 Past seasons o'er, and be again a child ,
 To sit in fancy on the turf-clad slope
 Down which the child would roll , to pluck gay
 flowers,
 Make posies in the sun, which the child's hand
 (Childhood offended soon, soon reconciled)
 Would throw away, and straight take up again,
 Then fling them to the winds, and o'er the
 lawn
 Bound with so playful and so light a foot,
 That the pressed daisy scarce declined her head.

CX

*ON AN INFANT DYING AS SOON
 AS BORN*

I saw where in the shroud did lurk
 A curious frame of Nature's work ,
 A floweret crush'd in the bud,
 A nameless piece of Babyhood,
 Was in her cradle-coffin lying ,
 Extinct, with scarce the sense of dying
 So soon to exchange the imprisoning womb
 For darker closets of the tomb !
 She did but ope an eye, and put
 A clear beam forth, then straight up shut
 For the long dark . ne'er more to see
 Through glasses of mortality
 Riddle of destiny, who can show
 What thy short visit meant, or know
 What thy errand here below ?

Shall we say that Nature blind
 Check'd her hand, and changed her mind,
 Just when she had exactly wrought
 A finish'd pattern without fault ?
 Could she flag, or could she tire,
 Or lack'd she the Promethean fire
 (With her nine moons' long workings sicken'd)
 That should thy little limbs have quicken'd ?
 Limbs so firm, they seem'd to assure
 Life of health, and days mature
 Woman's self in miniature !
 Limbs so fair, they might supply
 (Themselves now but cold imagery)
 The sculptor to make Beauty by
 Or did the stern-eyed Fate descry
 That babe or mother, one must die ;
 So in mercy left the stock
 And cut the branch , to save the shock
 Of young years widow'd, and the pain
 When single state comes back again
 To the lone man who, reft of wife,
 Thenceforward drags a maim'd life ?
 The economy of Heaven is dark,
 And wisest clerks have miss'd the mark,
 Why human buds, like this, should fall,
 More brief than fly ephemeral
 That has his day , while shrivell'd crones
 Stiffen with age to stocks and stones ,
 And crabb'd use the conscience sears
 In sinners of an hundred years
 Mother's prattle, mother's kiss,
 Baby fond, thou ne'er wilt miss
 Rites, which custom does impose,
 Silver bells, and baby clothes ,
 Coral redder than those lips
 Which pale death did late eclipse ;
 Music framed for infants' glee,
 Whistle never tuned for thee ,
 Though thou want'st not, thou shalt have them,
 Loving hearts were they which gave them.
 Let not one be missing ; nurse,

See them laid upon the hearse
 Of infant slain by doom perverse.
 Why should kings and nobles have
 Pictured trophies to their grave,
 And we, churls, to thee deny
 Thy pretty toys with thee to lie—
 A more harmless vanity ?

CXI

THE CHANGE

Louisa serious grown and mild,
 I knew you once a romping child,
 Obstreperous much, and very wild

 Then you would clamber up my knees,
 And strive with every art to tease,
 When every art of yours could please

 Those things would scarce be proper now,
 But they are gone, I know not how ;
 And woman's written on your brow.

 Time draws his finger o'er the scene ;
 But I cannot forget between
 The thing to me you once have been.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

CXII

IANTHE'S SHELL

Darling shell, where hast thou been,
 West or East ? or heard or seen ?
 From what pastimes art thou come ?
 Can we make amends at home ?

Whether thou hast tuned the dance
 To the maids of ocean

Know I ^jnot , but Ignorance
Never hurts Devotion.

This I know, Ianthé's shell,
I must ever love thee well,
Though too little to resound
While the Nereids dance around ;

For, of all the shells that are,
Thou art sure the brightest ,
Thou, Ianthé's infant care,
Most these eyes delightest

To thy early aid she owes
Teeth like budding snowdrop rows :
And what other shell can say
On her bosom once it lay ?

That which into Cyprus bore
Venus from her native sea,
(Pride of shells !)) was never more
Dear to her than thou to me.

CXIII

IANTHE

From you, Ianthé, little troubles pass
Like little ripples down a sunny river ;
Your pleasures spring like daisies in the grass,
Cut down, and up again as blithe as ever.

CXIV

THE SMILE

There are some wishes that may start
Nor cloud the brow nor sting the heart.
Gladly then would I see how smiled
One who now fondles with her child ;
How smiled she but six years ago,
Herself a child, or nearly so.

Yes, let me bring before my sight
 The silken tresses chain'd up tight,
 The tiny fingers tipt with red
 By tossing up the strawberry-bed ;
 Half-open lips, long violet eyes,
 A little rounder with surprise,
 And then (her chin against the knee)
 ' Mamma, who can that strange be ? '
 How grave the smile he smiles on me ! '

CXV

MY SERIOUS SON

My serious son ! I see thee look
 First on the picture, then the book
 I catch the wish that thou couldst paint
 The yearnings of the ecstatic saint
 Give it not up, my serious son !
 Wish it again, and it is done
 Seldom will any fail who tries
 With patient hand and steadfast eyes,
 And woos the true with such pure sighs.

CXVI

HOUSEHOLD GODS

Ye little household gods, that make
 My heart leap lighter with your play,
 And never let it sink or ache,
 Unless you are too far away ,

Eight years have flown, and never yet
 One day has risen up between
 The kisses of my earlier pet,
 And few the hours he was not seen

How can I call to you from Rome ?
 Will *mamma* teach what *babbo* said ?

Have ye not heard him talk at home
About the city of the dead ?

Marvellous tales will *babbo* tell,
If you don't clasp his throat too tight,
Tales which you, Arnold, will love well,
Though Julia's cheek turns pale with fright

How, swimming o'er the Tiber, Clelia
Headed the rescued virgin train ,
And, loftier virtue ! how Cornelia
Lived when her two brave sons were slain

This is my birthday may ye waltz .
Till mamma cracks her best guitar !
Yours are true pleasures , those are false
We wise ones follow from afar.

What shall I bring you ? would you like
Urn, image, glass, red, yellow, blue,
Stricken by Time, who soon must strike
As deep the heart that beats for you ?

CXVII

CHILD OF A DAY

Child of a day, thou knowest not
The tears that overflow thine urn,
The gushing eyes that read thy lot,
Nor, if thou knewest, couldst return !
And why the wish ! The pure and blest
Watch like thy mother o'er thy sleep.
O peace-ful night ! O envied rest !
Thou wilt not ever see her weep.

THOMAS CAMPBELL

CXVIII

GERTRUDE OF WYOMING'S CHILDHOOD

The rose of England bloomed on Gertrude's
cheek—

What though these shades had seen her birth,
her sire

A Briton's independence taught to seek
Far western worlds, and there his household
fire

The light of social love did long inspire,
And many a halcyon day he lived to see
Unbroken but by one misfortune dire,
When fate had reft his mutual heart but she
Was gone; and Gertrude climbed a widowed
father's knee—

A loved bequest ! and I may half impart
To them that feel the strong paternal tie,
How like a new existence to his heart
That living flower uprose beneath his eye,
Dear as she was, from cherub infancy,
From hours when she would round his garden
play,

To time when, as the ripening years went by,
Her lovely mind could culture well repay,
And more engaging grew from pleasing day to
day.

I may not print those thousand infant charms
(Unconscious fascination, undesign'd !) ;
The orison repeated in his arms,
For God to bless her sire, and all mankind ;
The book, the bosom on his knee reclined,
Or how sweet fairy-lore he heard her con
(The playmate ere the teacher of her mind)
All unaccompanied else her heart had gone
Till now, in Gertrude's eyes, their ninth blue
summer shone.

CXIX

INSPIRATION

Inspire me, child, with visions fair !
 For children, in Creation, are
 The only things that could be given
 Back, and alive—unchanged—to Heaven.

CXX

THE FLIGHT OF TIME

The more we live, more brief appear
 Our life's succeeding stages .
 A day to childhood seems a year,
 And years' like passing ages . . .
 Heaven gives our years of fading strength
 Indemnifying fleetness ;
 And those of youth, a seeming length
 Proportion'd to their sweetness.

LEIGH HUNT

CXXI

TO T. L. H.

(Six Years Old, During a Sickness)

Sleep breathes at last from out thee,
 My little patient boy ,
 And balmy rest about thee
 Smooths off the day's annoy.
 I sit me down, and think
 Of all thy winning ways :
 Yet almost wish, with sudden shrink,
 That I had less to praise.
 Thy sidelong pillowed meekness,
 Thy thanks to all that aid,

Thy heart, in pain and weakness,
 Of fancied faults afraid ;
 The little trembling hand
 That wipes thy quiet tears,—
 These, these are things that may demand
 Dread memories for years
 Ah, first-born of thy mother,
 When life and hope were new,
 Kind playmate of thy brother,
 Thy sister, father too ,
 My light, where'er I go,
 My bird, when prison-bound,
 My hand-in-hand companion,—no,
 My prayers shall hold thee round.
 To say ' He has departed,'—
 ' His voice '—' his face '—is gone ;
 To feel impatient-hearted,
 Yet feel we must bear on ,
 Ah, I could not endure
 To whisper of such woe,
 Unless I felt this sleep ensure
 That it will not be so

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK

CXXII

MARGARET LOVE PEACOCK

(Three Years Old)

Long night succeeds thy little day ;
 O blighted blossom ! can it be,
 That this grey stone and grassy clay
 Have closed our anxious care of thee ?
 The half-formed speech of artless thought,
 That spoke a mind beyond thy year-s,
 The song, the dance by nature taught,
 The sunny smiles, the transient tears,
 The symmetry of face and form,
 The eye with light and life replete,

The little hear. so fondly warm,
The voice so musically sweet,—

These, lost to hope, in memory yet
Around the hearts that loved thee cling,
Shadowing, with long and vain regret,
The too fair promise of thy spring.

JOHN WILSON

CXXIII

TO A SLEEPING CHILD

.. Who can tell what visions high
May bless an infant's sleeping eye !
What brighter throne can brightness find
To reign on than an infant's mind,
Ere sin destroy or error dim
The glory of the seraphim ?

Oh, vision fair, that I could be
Again as young, as pure as thee !

Fair was that face as break of dawn,
When o'er its beauty sleep was drawn
Like a thin veil that half-concealed
The light of soul, and half-revealed.
While thy hushed heart with visions wrought,
Each trembling eyelash moved with thought,
And things we dream, but ne'er can speak,
Like clouds came floating o'er thy cheek,
Such summer-clouds as travel light,
When the soul's heaven lies calm and bright ;
Till thou awak'st—then to thine eye
Thy whole heart leapt in ecstasy !
And lovely is that heart of thine,
Or sure these eyes could never shine
With such a wild, yet bashful glee,
Gay, half-o'ercome timidity !

SIR AUBREY DE VERE

CXXIV

*THE CHILDREN BAND**(The Children's Crusade)*

All holy influences dwell within
 The breast of Childhood . instincts fresh from
 God

Inspire it, ere the heart beneath the rod
 Of grief hath bled, or caught the plague of sin
 How mighty was that fervour which could win

Its way to infant souls !—and was the sod
 Of Palestine by infant Croisés trod ?
 Like Joseph went they forth, or Benjamin,
 In all their touching beauty, to redeem ?

And did their soft lips kiss the sepulchre ?
 Alas ! the lovely pageant, as a dream,
 Faded ! they sank not through ignoble fear ,
 They felt no Moslem steel By mountain, stream,
 In sands, in fens, they died—no mother near !

BRYAN WALLER PROCTER

CXXV

TO ADELAIDE

Child of my heart ! my sweet beloved First-born !
 Thou dove, that tidings bring'st of calmer hours
 Thou rainbow, who dost shine when all the
 showers

Are past—or passing ! Rose which hath no
 thorn,

No spot, no blemish, pure and unforlorn !
 Untouched, untainted ! Oh, my flower of
 flowers !

More welcome than to bees are summer bowers ,
 To stranded seamen, life-assuring morn

Welcome—a thousand welcomes Care, who
 clings
 Round all, seems loosening now its serpent fold ;
 New hope springs upward , and the bright world
 seems
 Cast back into a youth of endless springs !
 Sweet mother, is it so ?—or grow I old,
 Bewildered in divine Elysian dreams ?

CXXVI

WISHES

Sweet be her dreams, the fair, the young !
 Grace, Beauty, breathe upon her !
 Music, haunt thou about her tongue !
 Life, fill her path with honour !
 All golden thoughts, all wealth of days,
 Truth, Friendship, Love, surround her !
 So may she smile, till life be closed,
 And Angel hands have crowned her !

JOHN KEBLE

CXXVII

CHILDREN WITH DUMB CREATURES

Thou mak'st me jealous, Infant dear ;
 Why wilt thou waste thy precious smiles,
 Thy beckonings blithe, and joyous wiles,
 On bird or insect gliding near ?
 Why court the deaf and blind ?
 What is this wondrous sympathy,
 That draws thee so, heart, ear and eye,
 Towards the inferior kind ?
 We tempt thee much to look and sing,—
 Thy mimic notes are rather drawn
 From feathered playmates on the lawn.
 The quivering moth or bee's soft wing,

Brushing the window-pane,
 Will reach thee in thy dreamy trance,
 When nurses' skill for one bright glance
 Hath toil'd an hour in vain.

And as thou hold'st the creatures dear,
 So are they fain on thee to wait
 Blood-hounds at thy caress abate
 Their bayings wild, yea, without fear
 Thou dalliest in the lair
 Of watch-dog stern, thy mother's eye
 Shrinks not to see thee slumbering lie
 Beneath his duteous care . .

Ah, you have been in Jesus' arms,
 The holy Fount hath you imbued
 With His all-healing kindly Blood,
 And somewhat of His pastoral charms,
 And care for His lost sheep,
 Ye there have learn'd : in order'd tones
 Gently to soothe the lesser ones,
 And watch their noon-day sleep. . . .

CXXVIII

GARDENING

Seest thou yon woodland child,
 How amid flowerets wild,
 Wilder himself, he plies his pleasure-task ?
 That ring of fragrant ground,
 With its low woodbine bound,
 He claims : no more, as yet, his little heart need
 ask.

There learns he flower and weed
 To sort with careful heed .
 He waits not for the weary noontide hour.
 There with the soft night air
 Comes his refreshing care :
 Each tiny leaf looks up, and thanks him for the
 shower,

Thus faithful found awhile,
 He wins the joyous smile
 Of friend or parent, glad and bright is he,
 When for his garland gay
 He hears the kind voice say,
 ' Well hast thou wrought, dear boy the garden
 thine shall be ' ,

And when long years are flown,
 And the proud word, Mine Own,
 Familiar sounds, ' what joy in field or bower
 To view by Memory's aid
 Again that garden glade,
 And muse on all the lore there learned in each
 bright hour !

Is not a life well spent
 A child's play-garden, lent
 For Heaven's high trust to train young heart
 and limb ?
 When in yon field on high
 Our hard-won powers we try,
 Will no mild tones of earth blend with the
 adoring hymn ?

O fragrant, sure, will prove
 The breath of patient Love,
 Even from these fading sweets by Memory cast,
 As deepening evermore
 To Him our song we pour,
 Who lent us Earth, that He might give us Heaven
 at last.

CXXIX

' NURSE, LET ME DRAW '

Nurse, let me draw the baby's veil aside,
 I want to see the Cross upon her brow '
 Nay, maiden dear, that seal may not abide
 In sight of mortals' ken ; 'tis vanish'd now.

Alas, for pity ! when the holy man
 Said even now, ' I sign thee with the cross, '

What joy to think that I at home should scan
 The bright, clear lines! O, sad and sudden
 loss !'

—Complain not so, my child no loss is here,
 But endless gain If thou wilt open wide
 Faith's inward eye, soon shall to thee appear
 What now by wondering angels is descried,
 Thy Lord's true token, seen but not believ'd,
 And therefore doubly blest O, mark it well,
 And be this rule in thy young heart receiv'd,
 Blest, who content with Him in twilight
 dwell

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

CXXX

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY

My lost William, thou in whom
 Some bright spirit lived, and did
 That decaying robe consume
 Which its lustre faintly hid,
 Here its ashes find a tomb,
 But beneath this pyramid
 Thou art not—if a thing divine
 Like thee can die, thy funeral shrine
 Is thy mother's grief and mine

Where art thou, my gentle child ?

Let me think thy spirit feeds,
 With its life intense and mild,
 The love of living leaves and weeds,
 Among these tombs and ruins wild,—

Let me think that through low seeds
 Of sweet flowers and sunny grass,
 Into their hues and scents may pass
 A portion . . .

CXXXI

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY

(*A Fragment*)

Thy little footsteps on the sands
 Of a remote and lonely shore ;
 The twinkling of thine infant hands,
 Where now the worm will feed no more :
 Thy mingled look of love and glee
 When we returned to gaze on thee !

FELICIA DOROTHEA HEMANS

CXXXII

THE CHILD'S SLEEP

Thou sleepest—but when wilt thou wake, fair
 child ?
 When the fawn awakes in the forest wild ?
 When the lark's wing mounts with the breeze of
 morn ?
 When the first rich breath of the rose is born ?
 Lonely thou sleepest, yet something lies
 Too deep and still on thy soft-sealed eyes ;
 Mournful, though sweet, is thy rest to see—
 When will the hour of thy rising be ?
 Not when the fawn wakes—not when the lark
 On the crimson cloud of the morn floats dark.
 Grief with vain passionate tears hath wet
 The hair, shedding gleams from thy pale brow yet,
 Love, with sad kisses unfelt, hath pressed
 Thy meek-dropt eyelids and quiet breast,
 And the glad spring, calling out bird and bee,
 Shall colour all blossoms, fair child ! but thee.
 Thou'rt gone from us, bright one !—that *thou*
 shouldst die,
 And life be left to the butterfly !

Thou'rt gone as a dewdrop is swept from the
bough ,
Oh ! for the world where thy home is now !
How may we love but in doubt and fear,
How may we anchor our fond hearts here ,
How should e'en joy but a trembler be,
Beautiful dust ! when we look on thee ?

JOHN CLARKE

CXXXIII

'SEASONS RETURN'

Spring comes anew, and brings each little pledge
That still, as wont, my childish heart deceives .
I stoop again for violets in the hedge,
Among the ivy and old withered leaves ;
And often mark, amid the clumps of sedge,
The pooty-shells I gathered when a boy .
But cares have claimed me many an evil day,
And chilled the relish which I had for joy
Yet when crab-blossoms blush among the May,
As erst in years gone by, I scramble now
Up 'mid the bramble for my old esteems,
Filling my hands with many a blooming bough ,
Till the heart-stirring past as present seems,
Save the bright sunshine of those fairy dreams.

CXXXIV

MY EARLY HOME

Here sparrows build upon the trees,
And stockdove hides her nest ;
The leaves are winnow'd by the breeze
Into a calmer rest ,
The black-cap's song was very sweet,
That used the rose to kiss ;
It made the Paradise complete :
My early home was this.

The redbreast from the sweet-briar bush
 Drop't down to pick the worm ,
 On the horse-chestnut sang the thrush,
 O'er the house where I was born ;
 The moonlight, like a shower of pearls,
 Fell o'er this ' bower of bliss,'
 And on the bench sat boys and girls :
 My early home was this.

The old house stoop'd just like a cave,
 Thatch'd o'er with mosses green ,
 Winter around the walls would rave,
 But all was calm within ;
 The trees are here all green again,
 Here bees the flowers still kiss,
 But flowers and trees seem'd sweeter then :
 My early home was this

HARTLEY COLERIDGE

CXXXV

CHILDHOOD

Oh, what a wilderness were this sad world
 If man were always man, and never child ;
 If Nature gave no time, so sweetly wild,
 When every thought is deftly crisped and curled,
 Like fragrant hyacinth with dew impearled,
 And every feeling in itself confiding,
 Yet never single, but continuous, gliding
 With wavy motion as, on wings unfurled,
 A seraph clips Empyreal ! Such man was
 Ere sin had made him know himself too well.
 No child was born ere that primaeval loss
 What might have been no living soul can tell,
 But Heaven is kind, and therefore all possess
 Once in their life fair Eden's simpleness.

CXXXVI

TO AN INFANT

Wise is the way of Nature, first to make
 This tiny model of what is to be,
 A thing that we may love as soon as see,
 That seems as passive as a summer lake
 When there is not a sigh of wind to shake
 The aspen leaf upon the tall, slim tree
 Yet who can tell, sweet infant mystery,
 What thoughts in thee may now begin to wake ?
 Something already dost thou know of pain,
 And, sinless, bear'st the penalty of sin ,
 And yet as quickly wilt thou smile again
 After thy cries, as vanishes the stain
 Of breath from steel So may the peace within
 In thy ripe season re-assert its reign.

CXXXVII

*TO MARGARET, ON HER FIRST
BIRTHDAY*

One year is past, with change and sorrow fraught,
 Since first the little Margaret drew her breath,
 And yet the fatal names of Sin and Death,
 Her sad inheritance, she knoweth not
 That lore, by earth inevitably taught,
 In the still world of spirits is untold ,
 'Tis not of Death or Sin that angels hold
 Sweet converse with the slumb'ring infant's
 thought
 Merely she is with God, and God with her
 And her meek ignorance Guiltless of clamour,
 For her is faith a hope , her innocence
 Is holiness , the bright-eyed crowing glee,
 That makes her leap her grandsire's face to
 see,
 Is love unfeign'd and willing reverence.

CXXXVIII

*ON PARTING WITH A VERY PRETTY,
BUT VERY LITTLE LADY*

'Tis ever thus We only meet on earth
 That we may know how sad it is to part ·
 And sad indeed it were, if, in the heart,
 There were no store reserved against a dearth,
 No calm Elysium 'for departed Mirth,
 Haunted by gentle shadows of past Pleasure
 Where the sweet folly, the light-footed measure,
 And graver trifles of the shining hearth
 Live in their own dear image Lady fair,
 Thy presence in our little vale has been
 A visitation of the Fairy Queen,
 Who for brief space reveals her beauty rare,
 And shows her tricky feats to mortal eyes,
 Then fades into her viewless Paradise

CXXXIX

TO A PROUD KINSWOMAN

Fair maid, had I not heard thy baby cries,
 Nor seen thy girlish, sweet vicissitude,
 Thy mazy motions, striving to elude,
 Yet wooing still a parent's watchful eyes,
 Thy humours, many as the opal's dyes,
 And lovely all,—methinks thy scornful mood,
 And bearing high of stately womanhood,—
 Thy brow, where Beauty sits to tyrannise
 O'er humble love, had made me sadly fear thee,
 For never sure was seen a royal bride,
 Whose gentleness gave grace to so much pride—
 My very thoughts would tremble to be near
 thee ;
 But when I see thee at thy father's side,
 Old times unqueen thee, and old loves endear
 thee.

CXL

*SHE PASS'D AWAY LIKE MORNING
DEW*

Ah ! well it is, since she is gone,
She can return no more,
To see the face so dim and wan,
That was so warm before.

Familiar things would all look strange,
And pleasure past be woe ,
A record sad of ceaseless change,
Is all the world below

The very hills, they are not now
The hills which once they were ,
They change as we are changed, or how
Could we the burden bear ? .

She pass'd away, like morning dew,
Before the sun was high
So brief her time, she scarcely knew
The meaning of a sigh.

As round the rose its soft perfume,
Sweet love around her floated ,
Admired she grew—while mortal doom
Crept on, unfear'd, unnoted

Love was her guardian Angel here,
But love to death resign'd her ,
Tho' Love was kind, why should we fear,
But holy death is kinder ?

THOMAS HOOD

CXLI

I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER

I remember, I remember
 The house where I was born,
 The little window where the sun
 Came peeping in at morn,
 He never came a wink too soon,
 Nor brought too long a day,
 But now, I often wish the night
 Had borne my breath away

I remember, I remember
 The roses, red and white,
 The violets, and the lily-cups,
 Those flowers made of light !
 The lilac where the robin built,
 And where my brother set
 The laburnum on his birthday—
 The tree is living yet !

I remember, I remember
 Where I was used to swing,
 And thought the air must rush as fresh
 To swallows on the wing,
 My spirit flew in feathers then,
 That is so heavy now,
 And summer pools could hardly cool
 The fever on my brow

I remember, I remember
 The fir trees dark and high ;
 I used to think their slender tops
 Were close against the sky :
 It was a childish ignorance,
 But now 'tis little joy
 To know I'm farther off from Heav'n
 Than when I was a boy.

MARY HOWITT

CXLII

LITTLE CHILDREN

Sporting through the forest wide ;
Playing by the waterside ,
Wandering o'er the heathy fells,
Down within the woodland dells ;
All among the mountains wild
Dwelleth many a little child !
In the baron's hall of pride,
By the poor man's dull fireside ;
'Mid the mighty, 'mid the mean,
Little children may be seen,
Like the flowers that spring up fair,
Bright and countless, everywhere.

Wheresoe'er a foot hath gone,
Wheresoe'er the sun hath shone
On a league of peopled ground,
Little children may be found !
Blessings on them ! they in me
Move a kindly sympathy
With their wishes hopes and fears ;
With their laughter and their tears ;
With their wonder so intense,
And their small experience !

Little children, not alone
On the wide earth are ye known.
'Mid its labours and its cares,
'Mid its sufferings and its cares ;
Free from sorrow, free from strife,
In the world of love and life,
Where no sinful thing hath trod,
In the presence of your God,
Spotless, blameless, glorified,
Little children, ye abide !

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY,
LORD MACAULAY

CXLIII

THE REMORSE OF CAIN

All hearts are light around the hall
Save his who is the lord of all
The painted roofs, the attendant train,
The lights, the banquet, all are vain
He sees them not His fancy strays
To other scenes and other days.
A cot by a lone forest's edge,
A fountain murmuring through the trees,
A garden with a wildflower hedge,
Whence sounds the music of the bees,
A little flock of sheep at rest
Upon a mountain's swarthy breast
On his rude spade he seems to lean
Beside the well remembered stone,
Rejoicing o'er the promised green
Of the first harvest man hath sown.
He sees his mother's tears ,
His father's voice he hears,
Kind as when first it praised his youthful skill.
And soon a seraph-child,
In boyish rapture wild,
With a light crook comes bounding from the hill,
Kisses his hands and strokes his face,
And nestles close in his embrace

WILLIAM BARNES

CXLIV

CHILDHOOD

Aye at that time our days were but vew,
An' our lim's were but small, an' a-growèn ;

An' then the feàir worold wer new,
 An' life were all hopevul an' gay,
 An' the times o' the sproutèn o' leaves,
 An' the cheäk-burnèn seasons o' mowèn,
 An' bindèn o' red-headed sheaves,
 Wer all welcome seasons o' jay.

Then the housen seem'd high, that be lów,
 An' the brook did seem wide that is narrow,
 An' time, that do vlee, did goo slow,
 An' veelèns now feeble wer strong,
 An' our worold did end wi' the neàmes
 Ov the Sha'sbury Hill or Bulbarrow ;
 An' life did seem only the geames
 That we play'd as the days rolled along.

Then the rivers, an' high-timber'd lands,
 An' the zilvery hills, 'ithout buyèn,
 Did seem to come into our hands
 Vrom others that own'd 'em avore ,
 An' all zickness, an' sorrow, an' need,
 Seem'd to die wi' the wold vo'k a-dyèn,
 An' leàve us vor ever a-freed
 From evils our vorefathers bore.

But happy be childern the while
 They have elders a-livèn to love 'em,
 An' teàke all the wearisome tweil
 That zome hands or others mus' do ;
 Like the low-headed shrubs that be warm,
 In the lewth o' the trees up above 'em,
 A-screen'd vrom the cwold blowèn storm
 That the timber avore 'em must rue.

CXLV

THE WELSHNUT TREE

When in the evenèn the zun's a zinkèn,
 A-drowèn sheades vrom the yollow west,
 An' mother, weary, 's a-zot a thinkèn,
 Wi' vwolded eàrms by the vire at rest,

Then we do zwarm, O,
 Wi' such a gharm, O,
 So vull o' glee by the welshnut tree.

A-leàvèn father in-doors, a leinèn
 In his girt chair in his easy shòes,
 Or in the settle so high behine en,
 While downa bezide en the dog do snooze,
 Our tongues do run, O,
 Enough to stun, O,
 Your head wi' vlee by the welshnut tree.

There we do play ' thread the woman's needle,'
 An' slap the maidens a dartèn drough :
 Or try who'll ax 'em the hardest riddle,
 Or soonest tell woone a-put us, true ,
 Or zit an' ring, O,
 The bells, ding, ding, O,
 Upon our knee by the welshnut tree.

An' zome do goo out, an' hide in orcha't
 An' tothers, sliely a-stealèn by,
 Where there's a dark cunnèn pleace, do sarch it,
 Till they do zee em an' cry, ' I spy,'
 An' thik a-vound, O,
 Do gié a bound, O,
 To get off free to the welshnut tree

Poll went woone night, that we midden vind her,
 Inzide a woak wi' a hollow moot,
 An' drough a hole near the groun' behind her,
 I pok'd a stick in, an' catch'd her voot ,
 An' out she scream'd, O,
 An' jump'd, an' seem'd, O,
 A'móst to vlee to the welshnut tree.

An' when, at last, at the drashel, mother
 Do call us, smilèn, in-door to rest,
 Then we do cluster by woone another,
 To zee hwome them we do love the best :
 An' then do sound, O,
 ' Good night,' all round, O,
 To end our glee by the welshnut tree.

CXLVI

THE TURNSTILE

Ah ! sad wer we as we did peace
The wold church road, wi' downcast feace,
The while the bells, that mwaoan'd so deep
Above our child a-left asleep,
Wer now a-zingèn all alive
Wi' tother bells to meake the vive
But up at woone pleace we come by,
'Twer hard to keep woone's two eyes dry :
On Stean-cliff road, 'ithin the drong,
Up where, as vo'k do pass along,
The turnèn stile, a-painted white,
Do sheen by day an' show by night
Vor always there, as we did goo
To church, thik stile did let us drough,
Wi' spreadèn earms that wheel'd to guide
Us each in turn to tother zide
An' vu'st ov all the train he took
My wife, wi' winsome gait an' look ,
An' then zent on my little maid,
A-skippèn onward, overjay'd
To reach ageàn the pleáce o' pride,
Her comely mother's left han' zide
An' then a-wheelèn roun', he took
On me, 'ithin his thir'd white nook
An' in the fourth, a-sheakèn wild,
He zent us on our giddy child.
But eesterday he guided slow
My downcast Jenny, vull o' woe,
An' then my little maid in black,
A-walkèn softly on her track ,
An' after he'd a-turn'd agean,
To let me goo along the leane,
He had noo little bwoy to vill
His last white earms, an' they stood still.

CXLVII

THE LITTLE SISTER

O' zummer night, as day did gleam,
 Wi' weänèn light, vrom red to wan,
 An' we did play above the stream
 Avore our house a-windèn on,
 Our little sister, light o' tooe,
 Did skip about in all her pride
 O' snow-white frock an' sash o' blue,
 A sheape that night wer slow to hide,
 Bezide the brook a-tricklèn thin
 Among the poppies, out an' in

If periwinkles' buds o' blue
 By lilies' hollow cups do wind,
 What then can their two colours do
 But call our sister back to mind ?
 She wore noo black—she wore her white ,
 She wore noo black—she wore her blue ,
 She never murn'd another's flight,
 Vor she's avore us all to goo
 Vrom where our litty veet did tread
 Vrom stwone to stwone the water's bed

CXLVIII

THE MOTHERLESS CHILD

The zun'd a-zet back t'other night,
 But in the zettèn pleast
 The clouds, a-redden'd by his light,
 Still glow'd avore my feace
 An' I've a-lost my Meary's smile,
 I thought , but still I have her chile,
 Zoo like her, that my eyes can treace
 The mother's in her daughter's feace
 O little feace so near to me,
 An' like thy mother's gone , why need I zay

Sweet night cloud, wi' the glow o' my lost
day,

Thy looks be always dear to me ?

The zun'd a-zet another night ,

But, by the moon on high,

He still did zend us back his light

Below a cwolder sky.

My Meary's in a better land

I thought, but still her chile's at hand,

An' in her chile she'll zend me on

Her love, though she herself's a-gone.

O little chile so near to me,

An' like thy mother gone , why need I zay,

Sweet moon, the messenger vrom my lost day,

Thy looks be always dear to me ?

CXLIX

THE MOTHER'S DREAM

I'd a dream to-night

As I fell asleep,

Oh ! the touching sight

Makes me still to weep :

Of my little lad,

Gone to leave me sad,

Aye, the child I had,

But was not to keep.

As in heaven high,

I my child did seek,

There, in train, came by

Children fair and meek,

Each in lily-white,

With a lamp alight ;

Each was clear to sight,

But they did not speak.

Then, a little sad,

Came my child in turn,

But the lamp he had,
 Oh ! it did not burn ;
 He, to clear my doubt,
 Said, half turn'd about,
 ' Your tears put it out ;
 Mother, never mourn.'

CL

THE SLANTEN LIGHT O' FALL

Ah ! Jeane, my maid, I stood to you,
 When you wer christen'd, small an' light,
 Wi' tiny carms o' red an' blue,
 A-hangèn in your robe o' white
 We brought ye to the hallow'd stwone,
 Vor Christ to teake ye vor His own,
 When harvest work wer all a-done,
 An' time brought round October zun—
 The slantèn light o' Fall

An' I can mind the wind wer rough,
 An' gather'd clouds, but brought noo storms,
 An' you did nessel warm enough,
 'Ithin your smilèn mother's eàrms
 The whindlèn grass did quiver light,
 Among the stubble, feaded white,
 An' if at times the zunlight broke
 Upon the ground, or on the vo'k,
 'Twer slantèn light o' Fall

An' when we brought ye drough the door
 O' Knapton Church, a child o' greace,
 There clu'ster'd round a'most a score
 O' vo'k to zee your tiny feäce
 An' there we all did veel so proud,
 To zee an' op'nèn in the cloud,
 An' then a stream o' light break drough,
 A-sheenèn brightly down on you—
 The slantèn light o' Fall.

But now your time's a-come to stand
 In church, a blushèn æt my zide,
 The while a bridegroom vrom my hand
 Ha' took ye vor his faithvul bride
 Your christèn neame we gi'd ye here,
 When Fall did cool the weastèn year,
 An' now, agean, we brought ye drough
 The doorway, wi' your surneame nev,
 In slantèn light o' Fall

An' zoo vur, Jeane, your 'ife is fear,
 An' God ha' been your steadvast friend,
 An' mid ye have mwore jay than ceàre,
 Vor ever, till your journey's end.
 An' I've a watch'd ye on wi' pride,
 But now I soon mus' leave your zide,
 Vor you ha' still life's spring-tide zun,
 But my life, Jeane, is now a-run
 To slantèn light o' Fall.

SARA COLERIDGE

CLI

O SLEEP, MY BABE

O sleep, my babe, hear not the rippling wave,
 Nor feel the breeze that round thee ling'ring
 strays
 To drink thy balmy breath,
 And sigh one long farewell

Soon shall it mourn above thy wat'ry bed,
 And whisper to me, on the wave-beat shore,
 Deep murm'ring in reproach,
 Thy sad untimely fate

Ere those dear eyes had open'd on the light,
 In vain to plead, thy coming life was sold,
 O waken'd but to sleep,
 Whence it can wake no more !

A thousand and a thousand silken leaves
 The tufted beech unfolds in early spring,
 All clad in tenderest green,
 All of the self-same shape

A thousand infant faces, soft and sweet,
 Each year sends forth, yet every mother views
 Her last, not least beloved
 Like its dear self alone

No musing mind hath ever yet foreshaped
 The face to-morrow's sun shall first reveal,
 No heart hath e'er conceived
 What love that face will bring

O sleep, my babe, nor heed how mourns the gale
 To part with thy soft locks and fragrant breath,
 As when it deeply sighs
 O'er autumn's latest bloom.

WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED

CLII

SKETCH OF A YOUNG LADY FIVE MONTHS OLD

My pretty, budding, breathing flower,
 Methinks, if I to-morrow
 Could manage, just for half-an-hour,
 Sir Joshua's brush to borrow,
 I might immortalise a few
 Of all the myriad graces
 Which Time, while yet they all are new,
 With newer still replaces
 I'd paint, my child, your deep blue eyes,
 Their quick and earnest flashes,
 I'd paint the fringe that round them lies,
 The fringe of long dark lashes,
 I'd draw with most fastidious care
 One eyebrow, then the other,

And that fair forehead, broad and fair,
The forehead of your mother. . .

Nor less on those twin rounded arms
My new-found skill would linger,
Nor less upon the rosy charms
Of every tiny finger,
Nor slight the small feet, little one,
So prematurely clever
That, though they neither walk nor run,
I think they'd jump for ever.

But then your odd endearing ways—
What study e'er could catch them ?
Your aimless gestures, endless plays—
What canvas e'er could match them ?
Your lively leap of merriment,
Your murmur of petition,
Your serious silence of content,
Your laugh of recognition

Here were a puzzling toil, indeed,
For Art's most fine creations !—
Grow on, sweet baby we will need,
To note your transformations,
No picture of your form or face,
Your waking or your sleeping,
But that which Love shall daily trace,
And trust to Memory's keeping.

Hereafter, when revolving years
Have made you tall and twenty,
And brought you blended hopes and fears
And sighs and slaves in plenty,
May those who watch our little saint
Among her tasks and duties,
Feel all her virtues hard to paint,
As now we deem her beauties.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

CLIII

From 'THRENODY'

The south-wind brings
Life, sunshine, and desire,
And on every mount and meadow
Breathes aromatic fire,
But over the dead he has no power,
The lost, the lost, he cannot restore;
And, looking over the hills, I mourn
The darling who shall not return

I see my empty house,
I see my trees repair their boughs,
And he, the wondrous child,
Whose silver warble wild
Outvalued every pulsing sound
Within the air's cerulean round—
The hyacinthine boy, for whom
Morn well might break and April bloom—
The gracious boy, who did adorn
The world whereinto he was born,
And by his countenance repay
The favour of the loving Day—
Has disappeared from the Day's eye,
Far and wide she cannot find him,
My hopes pursue, they cannot bind him

Re'turned this day, the south-wind searches,
And finds young pines and budding birches,
But finds not the budding man,
Nature, who lost, cannot remake him;
Fate let him fall, Fate can't retake him,
Nature, Fate, men, him seek in vain.

And whither now, my truant wise and sweet,
O, whither tend thy feet?
I had the right, few days ago,
Thy steps to watch, thy place to know;

How have I forfeited the right ?
Hast thou forgot me in a new delight ?
I hearken for thy household cheer,
O eloquent child !
Whose voice an equal messenger,
Conveyed thy meaning mild
What though the pains and joys
Whereof it spoke were toys
Fitting his age and ken,
Yet fairest dames and bearded men,
Who heard the sweet request,
So gentle, wise, and grave,
Bended with joy to his behest,
And let the world's affairs go by,
A while to share his cordial game,
Or mend his wicker waggon-frame,
Still plotting how their hungry ear
That winsome voice again might hear ,
For his lips could well pronounce
Words that were persuasions

Gentlest guardians marked serene
His early hope, his liberal mien ,
Took counsel from his guiding eyes
To make this wisdom earthly wise.
Ah, vainly do these eyes recall
The school-march, each day's festival,
When every morn my bosom glowed
To watch the convoy on the road ,
The babe in willow waggon closed,
With rolling eyes and face composed ;
With children forward and behind,
Like Cupids studiously inclined ,
And he the chieftain paced beside,
The centre of the troop allied,
With sunny face of sweet repose,
To guard the babe from fancied foes
The little captain innocent
Took the eye with him as he went ;
Each village senior paused to scan
And speak the lovely caravan.

From the window I look out
 To mark thy beautiful parade,
 Stately marching in cap and coat
 To some tune by fairies played—
 A music heard by thee alone
 To works as noble led thee on

Now Love and Pride, alas ! in vain,
 Up and down their glances strain
 The painted sled stands where it stood ,
 The kennel by the corded wood ,
 His gathered sticks to staunch the wall
 Of the snow-tower, when snow should fall :
 The ominous hole he dug in the sand,
 And childhood's castles built or planned ,
 His daily haunts I well discern—
 The poultry-yard, the shed, the barn—
 And every inch of garden ground
 Paced by the blessed feet around,
 From the roadside to the brook
 Whereinto he loved to look
 Step the meek birds where erst they ranged ;
 The wintry garden lies unchanged
 The brook into the stream runs on ,
 But the deep-eyed boy is gone

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER

CLIV

THE SONG OF THE SCHOOL :

St Mark's, Morwenstow

Sing to the Lord the children's hymn,
 His gentle love declare,
 Who bends amid the Seraphim
 To hear the children's prayer
 He at a mother's breast was fed,
 Though God's own Son was He ;
 He learnt the first small words He said
 At a meek mother's knee.

He held us to His mighty breast,
The children of the earth ,
He lifted up His hands and blessed
The babes of human birth.

So shall He be to us our God,
Our gracious Saviour too ,
The scenes we tread His footsteps trod,
The paths of youth He knew.

Lo ! from the stars His fare will turn
On us with glances mild :
The angels of His presence yearn
To bless the little child

Keep us, O Jesu Lord, for Thee,
That so, by Thy dear grace,
We, children of the font, may see
Our heavenly Father's face

Sing to the Lord the children's hymn,
His tender love declare,
Who bends amid the Seraphim,
To hear the children's prayer.

THOMAS WADE

CLV

THE RETURN

Smile, Baby ! for thy Mother home is coming,
Again to clasp thee to her yearning heart ;
Both memory and hope her way illuming
To the calm nook wherein thou nestled art.
Thou canst not run to meet her, Baby dear !
Nor hast sweet worded music on thy tongue,
But thou the music of her voice canst hear,
And o'er thee see her tender gazings hung :
And little recollections, fond tho' dim,
Enkindled in thy soul thro' ear and eye,

Shall lend thee graces of the cherubim
 Saluted by the breath of deity ·
 Stir all thy tiny limbs, and softly trace
 Sweet love-assurance on thy pretty face !

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

CLVI

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

Do ye hear the children weeping, O my brothers,
 Ere the sorrow comes with years ?
 They are leaning their young heads against their
 mothers,—

And *that* cannot stop the tears
 The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,
 The young birds are chirping in the nest,
 The young fawns are playing with the shadows,
 The young flowers are blowing toward the
 west—

But the young, young children, O my brothers,
 They are weeping bitterly !—
 They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
 In the country of the free.

Do you question the young children in the sorrow,
 Why their tears are falling so ?—
 The old man may weep for his to-morrow
 Which is lost in Long Ago.
 The old tree is leafless in the forest,
 The old year is ending in the frost,
 The old wound, if stricken, is the sorest,
 The old hope is hardest to be lost :
 But the young, young children, O my brothers,
 Do you ask them why they stand
 Weeping sore before the bosoms of their mothers,
 In our happy Fatherland ?

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
 And their looks are sad to see,

For the man's hoary anguish draws and presses
Down the cheeks of infancy—

'Your old earth,' they say, 'is very dreary,'

'Our young feet,' they say, 'are very weak !

Few paces have we taken, yet are weary—

Our grave-rest is very far to seek

Ask the aged why they weep, and not the
children,

For the outside earth is cold,

And we young ones stand without, in our
bewildering,

And the graves are for the old

'True,' say the children, 'it may happen

That we die before our time

Little Alice died last year—her grave is shapen

Like a snowball, in the rime

We looked into the pit prepared to take her

Was no room for any work in the close clay !

From the sleep wherein she lieth none will wake
her,

Crying, "Get up, little Alice ! it is day."

If you listen by that grave, in sun and shower,

With your ear down, little Alice never cries

Could we see her face, be sure we should not
know her,

For the smile has time for growing in her eyes.

And merry go her moments, lulled and stilled in

The shroud by the kirk-chime !

It is good when it happens,' say the children,

'That we die before our time' . . .

'For oh,' say the children, 'we are weary,

And we cannot run or leap

If we cared for any meadows, it were merely

To drop down in them and sleep

Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping—

We fall upon our faces, trying to go ;

And, underneath our heavy eyelids drooping,

The reddest flower would look as pale as snow

For, all day, we drag our burden tiring

Through the coal-dark, underground,

Or, all day, we drive the wheels of iron
In the factories, round and round.

' For, all day, the wheels are droning, turning,—
Their wind comes in our faces,—
Till our hearts turn, our heads with pulses
burning,

And the walls turn in their places
Turns the sky in the high window blank and
reeling,

Turns the long light that drops adown the wall,
Turn the black flies that crawl along the ceiling,
All are turning, all the day, and we with all—
And all day, the iron wheels are droning,

And sometimes we could pray,
" O ye wheels " (breaking out in a mad moaning),
" Stop ! be silent for to-day ! " "

Ay, be silent ! Let them hear each other
breathing

For a moment, mouth to mouth !
Let them touch each other's hands, in a fresh
wreathing

Of their tender human youth !
Let them feel that this cold metallic motion
Is not all the life God fashions or reveals
Let them prove their living souls against the
notion

That they live in you, or under you, O wheels !—
Still, all day, the iron wheels go onward,
Grinding life down from its mark,
And the children's souls, which God is calling
sunward,

Spin on blindly in the dark

They look up, with their pale and sunken faces,
And their look is dread to see,
For they mind you of their angels in high places,
With eyes turned on Deity !—

' How long,' they say, ' how long, O cruel nation,
Will you stand, to move the world, on a child's
heart,—

Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpitation,
And tread onward to your throne amid the
 mart ?
Our blood splashes upward, O gold-heaper,
And your purple shows your path !
But the child's sob in the silence curses deeper
Than the strong man in his wrath.'

CLVII

THE PET-NAME

I have a name, a little name,
Uncadenced for the ear,
Unhonoured by ancestral claim,
Unsanctified by prayer and psalm
The solemn font anear.

It never did, to pages wove
For gay romance, belong.
It never dedicate did move
As 'Sacharissa,' unto love—
'Orinda,' unto song

Though I write books it will be read
Upon the leaves of none,
And afterward, when I am dead,
Will ne'er be graved for sight or tread
Across my funeral-stone.

This name, whoever chance to call,
Perhaps your smile may win
Nay, do not smile ! mine eyelids fall
Over mine eyes, and feel withal
The sudden tears within.

Is there a leaf that greenly grows
Where summer meadows bloom,
But gathereth the winter snows,
And changeth to the hue of those
If lasting till they come ?

Is there a word, or jest, or game,
 But time incrusteth round
 With sad associate thoughts the same ?
 And so to me my very name
 Assumes a mournful sound. ,

My brother gave that name to me
 When we were children twain,—
 When names acquired baptismally
 Were hard to utter, as to see
 That life had any pain.

No shade was on us then, save one
 Of chestnuts from the hill—
 And through the word our laugh did run
 As part thereof. The mirth being done,
 He calls me by it still

Nay, do not smile ! I hear in it
 What none of you can hear,—
 The talk upon the willow seat,
 The bird and wind that did repeat
 Around, our human cheer

I hear the birthday's noisy bliss,
 My sisters' woodland glee,—
 My father's praise, I did not miss,
 When stooping down he cared to kiss
 The poet at his knee,—

And voices, which, to name me, aye
 Their tenderest tones were keeping—
 To some I nevermore can say
 An answer, till God wipes away
 In heaven these drops of weeping

My name to me a sadness wears ,
 No murmurs cross my mind
 Now God be thanked for these thick tears,
 Which show, of those departed years,
 Sweet memories left behind !

Now God be thanked for years enwrought
 With love which softens yet !

Now God be thanked for every thought
Which is so tender, it h^{as} caught
Earth's guerdon of regret !

Earth saddens, never shall remove,
Affections purely given ,
And e'en that mortal grief shall prove
The immortality of love,
And heighten it with Heaven.

CLVIII

THE DESERTED GARDEN

I mind me in the days departed,
How often underneath the sun
With childish bounds I used to run
To a garden long deserted

The beds and walks were vanish'd quite ;
And whereso'er had struck the spade,
The greenest grasses Nature laid,
To sanctify her right

I call'd the place my wilderness,
For no one enter'd there but I
The sheep look'd in, the grass to espy,
And pass'd it ne'ertheless.

The trees were interwoven wild,
And spread their boughs enough about
To keep both sheep and shepherd out,
But not a happy child

Adventurous joy it was for me !
I crept beneath the boughs, and found
A circle smooth of mossy ground
Beneath a poplar tree

Old garden rose-trees hedged it in,
Bedropt with roses waxen-white,
Well satisfied with dew and light,
And careless to be seen

Long years ago, it might befall,
When all the garden flowers were trim,
The grave old gardener prided him
On these the most of all.

Some Lady, stately overmuch,
Here moving with a silken noise,
Has blush'd beside them at the voice
That liken'd her to such.

Or these, to make a diadem,
She often may have pluck'd and twined,
Half-smiling as it came to mind,
That few would look at *them*

O, little thought that Lady proud,
A child would watch her fair white rose,
When buried lay her whiter brows,
And silk was changed for shroud !—

Nor thought that gardener (full of scorns
For men unlearn'd and simple phrase)
A child would bring it all its praise,
By creeping through the thorns !

To me upon my low moss seat,
Though never a dream the roses sent
Of science or love's compliment,
I ween they smelt as sweet

It did not move my grief to see
The trace of human step departed
Because the garden was deserted,
The blither place for me !

Friends, blame me not ! a narrow ken
Hath childhood 'twixt the sun and sword :
We draw the moral afterward—
We feel the gladness then

And gladdest hours for me did glide
In silence at the rose-tree wall
A thrush made gladness musical
Upon the other side

Nor he nor I did e'er incline
To peck or pluck the blossoms white —
How should I know but that they might
 Lead lives as glad as mine ?

To make my hermit-home complete,
I brought clear water from the spring
Praised in its own low murmuring,
 And cresses glossy wet

And so, I thought, my likeness grew
(Without the melancholy tale)
To 'gentle hermit of the dale,'
 And Angelina too

For oft I read within my nook
Such minstrel stories ; till the breeze
Made sounds poetic in the trees,
 And then I shut the book

If I shut this wherein I write,
I hear no more the wind athwart
Those trees, nor feel that childish heart
 Delighting in delight

My childhood from my life is parted,
My footsteps from the moss which drew
Its fairy circle round anew
 The garden is deserted

Another thrush may there rehearse
The madrigals which sweetest are ,
No more for me !—myself afar
 Do sing a sadder verse.

Ah me ! ah me ! when erst I lay
In that child's-nest so greenly wrought,
I laugh'd unto myself and thought,
 ' The time will pass away '

And still I laugh'd, and did not fear
But that, whene'er was pass'd away
The childish time, some happier play
 My womanhood would cheer.

I knew the time would pass away ,
 And yet, beside the rose-tree wall,
 Dear God, how seldom, if at all,
 Did I look up to pray !

The time is past and now that grows
 The cypress high among the trees,
 And I behold white sepulchres
 As well as the white rose,—

When wiser, meeke^r thoughts are given,
 And I have learnt to lift my face,
 Reminded how earth's greenest place
 The colour draws from heaven,—

It something saith for earthly pain,
 But more for heavenly promise free,
 That I who was, would shrink to be
 That happy child again.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

CLIX

TO A CHILD

O Child ! O new-born denizen
 Of life's great city ! on thy head
 The glory of the morn is shed,
 Like a celestial benison !
 Here at the portal thou dost stand,
 And with thy little hand
 Thou openest the mysterious gate
 Into the future's undiscovered land. . .

By what astrology of fear or hope
 Dare I to cast thy horoscope !
 Like the new moon thy life appears ;
 A little strip of silver light,
 And widening outward into night
 The shadowy disk of future years ,

And yet upon its outer rim,
A luminous circle, faint and dim,
And scarcely visible to us here,
Rounds and completes the perfect sphere ;
A prophecy and intimation,
A pale and feeble adumbration,
Of the great world of light, that lies
Behind all human destinies

CLX

CHILDREN

Come to me, O ye children !
For I hear you at your play,
And the questions that perplex'd me
Have vanished quite away.

Ye open the eastern windows,
That look towards the sun,
Where thoughts are singing swallows,
And the brooks of morning run.

In your hearts are the birds and the sunshine,
In your thoughts the brooklet's flow,
But in mine is the wind of Autumn,
And the first fall of the snow.

Ah ! what would the world be to us
If the children were no more ?
We should dread the desert behind us
Worse than the dark before.

What the leaves are to the forest,
With light and air for food,
Ere their sweet and tender juices
Have been hardened into wood,—

That to the world are children ;
Through them it feels the glow
Of a brighter and sunnier climate
Than reaches the trunks below.

Come to me, O ye children,
 And whisper in my ear
 What the birds and the winds are singing
 In your sunny atmosphere

For what are all our contrivings,
 And the wisdom of our books,
 When compared with your caresses,
 And the gladness of your looks ?

Ye are better than all the ballads
 That ever were sung or said ,
 For ye are living poems,
 And all the rest are dead.

CLXI

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

Between the dark and the daylight,
 When the night is beginning to lower,
 Comes a pause in the day's occupation,
 That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
 The patter of little feet,
 The sound of a door that is opened,
 And voices soft and sweet

From my study I see in the lamplight,
 Descending the broad hall stair,
 Grave Alice and laughing Allegra,
 And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper and then a silence ,
 Yet I know by their merry eyes
 They are plotting and planning together
 To take me by surprise

A sudden rush from the stairway,
 A sudden raid from the hall !
 By three doors left unguarded
 They enter my castle wall !

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and bac': of my chair ;
If I try to escape they surround me ;
They seem to be everywhere

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the B.shop of Pingen
In his Mouse Tower on the Rhine !

Do you think, O blue-eye ! banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old moustache as I am
Is not a match for you all ?

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart

And there will I keep you for ever,
Yes, for ever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away !

CLXII

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS

It was the schooner *Hesperus*,
That sailed the wintry sea ;
And the skipper had taken his little daughter
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
That ope in the month of May

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailor,
 Had sailed the Spanish main,
 ' I pray thee, put into yonder port,
 For I fear a hurricane

' Last night the moon had a golden ring,
 And to-night no moon we see ! '
 The skipper he blew a whiff from his pipe,
 And a scornful laugh laughed he

Colder and louder blew the wind,
 A gale from the North-east ;
 The snow fell hissing in the brine,
 And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain
 The vessel in its strength ,
 She shuddered and paused, like a frightened steed,
 Then leaped her cable's length

' Come hither ! come hither ! my little daughter,
 And do not tremble so ,
 For I can weather the roughest gale,
 That ever wind did blow.'

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat,
 Against the stinging blast ,
 He cut a rope from a broken spar,
 And bound her to the mast

' O father ! I hear the church-bells ring,
 Oh, say, what may it be ? '
 ' 'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast ! '—
 And he steered for the open sea.

' O father ! I hear the sound of guns,
 Oh, say, what may it be ? '
 ' Some ship in distress that cannot live
 In such an angry sea ! '

' O father ! I see a gleaming light,
 Oh, say, what may it be ? '
 But the father answered never a word,
 A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That saved she might be ;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,
On the Lake of Galilee

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Tow'ards the reef of Norman's Woe. . . .

At daybreak, on the black sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
Lashed close to a drifting mast

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes ,
And he saw her hair, like brown sea-weed,
On the billows fall and rise

Such was the wreck of the *Hesperus*,
In the midnight and the snow ,
Christ save us all from a death like this,
On the reef of Norman's Woe !

ROBERT MONTGOMERY

CLXIII

THE MYSTERY OF CHILDHOOD

Something divine about an Infant seems
To them, who watch it in that holy light
Of meaning, caught from these celestial words
Of Christ—' Forbid them not, but let them come.'
Fresh buds of being ! beautiful as frail
Types of that kingdom which our souls profess

To enter ! Symbols of that docile love
 And meek compliancy of creed and mind,
 Which Heaven hath canonized, and for its own
 Acknowledged,—well may thoughtful hearts per-
 ceive
 A mystery, beyond mere nature's law,
 Around them, girdled like a moral zone

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

CLXIV

THE LITTLE PEOPLE

A dreary place would this earth be
 Were there no little people in it,
 The song of life would lose its mirth,
 Were there no children to begin it
 No little forms, like buds, to grow,
 And make the admiring heart surrender ;
 No little hands on breast and brow,
 To keep the thrilling love-chords tender
 The sterner souls would grow more stern,
 Unfeeling nature more inhuman,
 And man to stoic coldness turn,
 And woman would be less than woman.
 Life's song, indeed, would lose its charm
 Were there no babies to begin it,
 A hopeless place this world would be,
 Were there no little people in it.

CLXV

CHILD-SONGS

Still linger in our noon of time
 And on our Saxon tongue
 The echoes of the home-born hymns
 The Aryan mothers sung.

And childhood had its litanies
In every age and clime ,
The earliest cradles of the race
Were rocked to poet's rhyme.

Nor sky, nor wave, nor tree, nor flower,
Nor green earth's virgin sod,
So moved the singer's heart of old
As these small ones of God.

The mystery of unfolding life
Was more than dawning morn,
Than opening flower or crescent moon
The human soul new-born !

And still to childhood's sweet appeal
The heart of genius turns,
And more than all the sages teach
From lisping voices learns,—

The voices loved of him who sang,
Where Tweed and Teviot glide,
That sound to-day on all the winds
That blow from Rydal-side,—

Heard in the Teuton's household songs,
And folk-lore of the Finn,
Where'er to holy Christmas hearths
The Christ-child enters in ! . .

CLXVI

RED RIDING-HOOD

On the wide lawn the snow lay deep
Ridged o'er with many a drifted heap ;
The wind that through the pine-trees sung,
The naked elm-boughs tossed and swung ,
While, through the window, frosty-starred
Against the sunset-purple barred,
We saw the sombre crow flap by,
The hawk's grey fleck along the sky,

The crested blue-jay flitting swift,
 The squirrel poising on the drift,
 Erect, alert, his broad grey tail
 Set to the north wind like a sail

It came to pass, one little lass,
 With flattened face against the glass,
 And eyes in which the tender dew
 Of pity shone, stood gazing through
 The narrow space her rosy lips
 Had melted from the frost's eclipse,
 'O, see,' she cried, 'the poor blue-jays !
 What is it that the black crow says ?'
 The squirrel lifts his little legs
 Because he has no hands, and begs,
 He's asking for my nuts, I know
 May I not feed them on the snow ?'

Half lost within her boots, her head
 Warm-sheltered in her hood of red,
 Her plaid skirt close about her drawn,
 She floundered down the wintry lawn,
 Now struggling through the misty veil
 Blown round her by the shrieking gale,
 Now sinking in a drift so low,
 Her scarlet hood could scarcely show
 Its dash of colour on the snow

She dropped for bird and beast forlorn
 Her little store of nuts and corn,
 And thus her timid guests bespoke —
 'Come, squirrel, from your hollow oak—
 Come, black old crow—come, poor blue-jay,
 Before your supper's blown away !
 Don't be afraid, we all are good ;
 And I'm mamma's Red Riding-Hood !'

O Thou, whose care is over all,
 Who heedest e'en the sparrow's fall,
 Keep in the little maiden's breast
 The pity which is now its guest !
 Let not her cultured years make less
 The childhood charm of tenderness,

But let her feel as well as know,
Nor harder with her polish grow !—
Unmoved by sentimental grief
That wails along some printed leaf,
But prompt with kindly word and deed
To own the claims of all who need ,
Let the grown woman's self make good
The promise of Red Riding-Hood !

CLXVII

VESTA

O Christ of God ! whose life and death
Our own have reconciled,
Most quietly, most tenderly
Take home thy star-named child !

Thy grace is in her patient eyes,
Thy words are on her tongue ,
The very silence round her seems
As if the angels sung

Her smile is as a listening child's
Who hears its mother call ,
The lilies of Thy perfect peace
About her pillow fall

She leans from out our clinging arms
To rest herself in Thine ,
Alone to Thee, dear Lord, can we
Our well-beloved resign !

O, less for her than for ourselves
We bow our heads and pray ,
Her setting star, like Bethlehem's
To Thee shall point the way !

CHARLES TENNYSON-TURNER

CLXVIII

LETTY'S GLOBE,

When Letty had scarce passed her third glad
 year,
 And her young, artless words began to flow,
 One day we gave the child a coloured sphere
 Of the wide earth, that she might mark and
 know,
 By tint and outline, all its sea and land
 She patted all the world, old empires peeped
 Between her baby fingers, her soft hand
 Was welcome at all frontiers How she leaped,
 And laughed, and prattled in her world-wide
 bliss,
 But when we turned her sweet unlearnèd eye
 On our own isle, she raised a joyous cry,
 ' Oh ! yes, I see it, Letty's home is there ! '
 And, while she hid all England with a kiss,
 Bright over Europe fell her golden hair

CLXIX

LITTLE SOPHY BY THE SEASIDE

Young Sophy leads a life without alloy
 Of pain, she dances in the stormy air,
 While her pink sash and length of golden hair
 With answering motion time her step of joy !
 Now turns she through that seaward gate of
 heaven,
 That opens on the sward above the cliff,—
 Glancing a moment at each barque and skiff,
 Along the roughening waters homeward driven,
 Shoreward she hies, her wooden spade in hand,
 Straight down to childhood's ancient field of play,

To claim her right of common in the land
 Where little edgeless tools make easy way—
 A right no cruel Act shall e'er gainsay,
 No greed dispute the freedom of the sand

CLXX

*LITTLE MARY AND THE CHILD
 MUMMY*

When the four quarters of the world shall rise,
 Men, women, children, at the Judgment-time,
 Perchance this Memphian girl, dead ere her
 prime,
 Shall drop her mask, and with dark new-born
 eyes
 Salute our English Mary, loved and lost,
 The Father knows her little scroll of prayer,
 And life as pure as His Egyptian air,
 For, though she knew not Jesus, nor the cost
 At which He won the world, she learn'd to pray;
 And though our own sweet babe on Christ's
 good name
 Spent her last breath, premonish'd and advised
 Of Him, and in His glorious Church baptized,
 She will not spurn this old-world child away,
 Nor put her poor embalm'd heart to shame

CLXXI

HER FIRST SWEET CHILD

It was her first sweet child, her heart's delight:
 And, though we all foresaw his early doom,
 We kept the fearful secret out of sight,
 We saw the canker, but she kissed the bloom

 And yet it might not be we could not brook
 To vex her happy heart with vague alarms,
 To blanch with fear her fond intrepid look,
 Or send a thrill through those encircling arms.

She smiled upon him, waking or at rest
 She could not dream her little child would die :
 She toss'd him fondly with an upward eye .
 She seem'd as buoyant as a summer spray,
 That dances with a blossom on its breast,
 Nor knows how soon it will be borne away.

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES, LORD
 HOUGHTON

CLXXII

CARPE DIEM

Youth, that pursuest with such eager pace
 Thy even way,
 Thou pantest on to win a mournful race .
 Then stay ! oh, stay !

Pause and luxuriate in thy sunny plain ;
 Loiter,—enjoy !
 Once past, thou never wilt come back again,
 A second Boy.

The hills of Manhood wear a noble face,
 When seen from far ,
 The mist of light from which they take their
 grace
 Hides what they are.

The dark and weary path those cliffs between
 Thou canst not know,
 And how it leads to regions never-green,
 Dead fields of snow

Pause, while thou mayst, nor deem that fate thy
 gain
 Which, all too fast,
 Will drive thee forth from this delicious plain,
 A Man at last

ALFRED TENNYSON, LORD TENNYSON

CLXXIII

THE BABY

The baby new to earth and sky,
 What time his tender palm is prest
 Against the circle of the breast,
 Has never thought that 'th's is I'.

But as he grows he gathers much,
 And learns the use of 'I,' and 'me,'
 And finds 'I am not what I see,
 And other than the things I touch.'

So rounds he to a separate mind
 From whence clear memory may begin,
 As thro' the frame that binds him in
 His isolation grows defined.

This use may lie in blood and breath,
 Which else were fruitless of their due,
 Had man to learn himself anew
 Beyond the second birth of Death.

CLXXIV

DE PROFUNDIS

THE TWO GREETINGS

To H. T. August 11, 1852

I

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
 Where all that was to be, in all that was,
 Whirl'd for a million æons thro' the vast
 Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddy light—
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
 Thro' all this changing world of changeless law,
 And every phase of ever-heightening life,

And nine long months of antenatal gloom,
 With this last moon, this crescent—her dark orb
 Touch'd with earth's light—thou comest, darling
 boy ;

Our own , a babe in lineament and limb
 Perfect, and prophet of the perfect man ,
 Whose face and form are hers and mine in one,
 Indissolubly married like our love ,
 Live, and be happy in thyself, and serve
 This mortal race thy kin so well, that men
 May bless thee as we bless thee, O young life
 Breaking with laughter from the dark , and may
 The fated channel where thy motion lives
 Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy course
 Along the years of haste and random youth
 Unshatter'd , then full-current thro' full man .
 And last in kindly curves, with gentlest fall,
 By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,
 To that last deep where we and thou are still.

II

I

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
 From that great deep, before our world begins,
 Whereon the Spirit of God moves as He will—
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
 From that true world within the world we see,
 Whereof our world is but the bounding shore—
 Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,
 With this ninth moon, that sends the hidden
 sun
 Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling boy.

II

For in the world, which is not ours, They said
 ' Let us make man ' and that which should be
 man,
 From that one light no man can look upon,
 Drew to this shore lit by the suns and moons

And all the shadows O dear Spirit half-lost
 In thine own shadow and thi, fleshly sign
 That thou art thou—who wailest being born
 And banish'd into mystery, and the pain
 Of this divisib'e-indivisible world
 Among the numerable-innumerable
 Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite space
 In finite-infinite Time—our mortal veil
 And shatter'd phantom of that infinite One,
 Who made thee unconceivabl, Thyself
 Out of His whole World-self and all in all—
 Live thou! and of the grain and husk, the
 grape
 And ivyberry, choose, and still depart
 From death to death thro' life and life, and
 find
 Nearer and ever nearer Him, who wrought
 Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,
 But this main-miracle, that thou art thou,
 With power on thine own act and on the world.

CLXXV

LULLABY

' Sleep, little birdie, sleep! will she not sleep
 Without her " little birdie " ? well then, sleep,
 And I will sing you " birdie." '

Saying this,

The woman half-turn'd round from him she
 loved,
 Left him one hand, and reaching thro' the night
 Her other, found (for it was close beside)
 And half-embraced the basket cradle-head
 With one soft arm, which, like the phant bough
 That moving moves the nest and nestling,
 sway'd
 The cradle, while she sang this baby song.

What does little birdie say
 In her nest at peep of day ?

Let me fly, says little birdie,
 Mother, let me fly away.
 Birdie, rest a little longer,
 Till the little wings are stronger.
 So she rests a little longer,
 Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,
 In her bed at peep of day ?
 Baby says, like little birdie,
 Let me rise and fly away
 Baby, sleep a little longer,
 Till the little limbs are stronger.
 If she sleeps a little longer,
 Baby too shall fly away.

CLXXVI

SWEET AND LOW

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
 Wind of the western sea,
 Low, low, breathe and blow,
 Wind of the western sea !
 Over the rolling waters go,
 Come from the dying moon, and blow,
 Blow him again to me ;
 While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
 Father will come to thee soon ;
 Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
 Father will come to thee soon ,
 Father will come to his babe in the nest,
 Silver sands all out of the west
 Under the silver moon :
 Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

CLXXVII

THE CITY CHILD

Dainty little maiden, whither would you wander ?
Whither from this pretty home, the home
where mother dwells ?

' Far and far away,' said the dainty little maiden,
' All among the gardens, auriculas, anemones,
Roses and lilies and Canterbury-bells '

Dainty little maiden, whither would you wander ?
Whither from this pretty house, this city-
house of ours ?

' Far and far away,' said the dainty little maiden,
' All among the meadows, the clover and the
clematis,
Daisies and kingcups and honeysuckle-flowers.'

CLXXVIII

IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

EMMIE

I

Our doctor had call'd in another, I never had
seen him before,
But he sent a chill to my heart when I saw him
come in at the door,
Fresh from the surgery-schools of France and
of other lands—
Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big merci-
less hands !
Wonderful cures he had done, O yes, but they
said too of him
He was happier using the knife than in trying
to save the limb,
And that I can well believe, for he look'd so
coarse and so red,
I could think he was one of those who would
break their jests on the dead,

ON INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD 167

And mangle the living dog that had loved him
and fawn'd at his knee—
Drench'd with the hellish ooral— that ever such
things should be !

II

Here was a hoy—I am sure that some of our
children would die
But for the voice of Love, and the smile, and
the comforting eye—
Here was a boy in the ward, every bone seem'd
out of its place—
Caught in a mill and crush'd—it was all but a
hopeless case .
And he handled him gently enough ; but his
voice and his face were not kind,
And it was but a hopeless case, he had seen it
and made up his mind,
And he said to me roughly ' The lad will need
little more of your care.'
' All the more need,' I told him, ' to seek the
Lord Jesus in prayer ,
They are all His children here, and I pray for
them all as my own ' .
But he turn'd to me, ' Ay, good woman, can
prayer set a broken bone ? '
Then he mutter'd half to himself, but I know
that I heard him say
' All very well—but the good Lord Jesus has
had His day.'

III

Had ? has it come ? It has only dawn'd. It
will come by and by.
O how could I serve in the wards if the hope of
the world were a lie ?
How could I bear with the sights and the loath-
some smells of disease
' But that He said ' Ye do it to Me, when ye do
it to these ' ?

IV

So he went. And we past to this ward where
the younger children are laid .
Here is the cot of our orphan, our darling, our
meek little maid ,
Empty you see just now ! We have lost her
who loved her so much—
Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sensitive plant
to the touch ;
Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often moved
me to tears,
Hers was the gratefulest heart I have found
in a child of her years—
Nay you remember our Emmie , you used to
send her the flowers ;
How she would smile at 'em, play with 'em,
talk to 'em hours after hours !
They that can wander at will where the works
of the Lord are reveal'd
Little guess what joy can be got from a cowslip
out of the field ,
Flowers to these ' spirits in prison ' are all they
can know of the spring,
They freshen and sweeten the wards like the
waft of an Angel's wing ,
And she lay with a flower in one hand and her
thin hands crost on her breast—
Wan, but as pretty as heart can desire, and we
thought her at rest,
Quietly sleeping—so quiet, our doctor said ' Poor
little dear,
Nurse, I must do it to-morrow , she'll never
live thro' it, I fear.'

V

I walk'd with our kindly old doctor as far as
the head of the stair,
Then I return'd to the ward ; the child didn't
see I was there

VI

Never since I was nurse, had I been so grieved
 and so vexed !
 Emmie had heard him Softly she call'd from
 her cot to the next,
 ' He says I shall never live thro' it, O Annie,
 what shall I do ? '
 Annie consider'd. ' If I,' said the wise little
 Annie, ' was you,
 I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to help me,
 for, Emmie, you see,
 It's all in the picture there . " Little children
 should come to Me " '
 (Meaning the print that you gave us, I find
 that it always can please
 Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with children
 about His knees)
 ' Yes, and I will,' said Emmie, ' but then if I
 call to the Lord,
 How should He know that it's me ? such a lot
 of beds in the ward ' '
 That was a puzzle for Annie Again she con-
 sider'd and said :
 ' Emmie, you put out your arms, and you leave
 'em outside on the bed—
 The Lord has so *much* to see to ! but, Emmie,
 you tell it Him plain,
 It's the little girl with her arms lying out on the
 counterpane.'

VII

I had sat three nights by the child—I could not
 watch her for four—
 My brain had begun to reel—I felt I could do it
 no more.
 That was my sleeping-night, but I thought that
 it never would pass.
 There was a thunderclap once, and a clatter of
 hail on the glass,
 And there was a phantom cry that I heard as
 I tost about,

The motherless bleat of a lamb in the storm
 and the darkness without ,
 My sleep was broken besides with dreams of
 the dreadful knife
 And fears for our delicate Emmie who scarce
 would escape with her life ,
 Then in the gray of the morning it seem'd she
 stood by me and smiled,
 And the doctor came at his hour, and we went
 to see to the child.

VIII

He had brought his ghastly tools · we believed
 her asleep again—
 Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying out on the
 counterpane ,
 Say that His day is done ! Ah why should we
 care what they say ?
 The Lord of the children had heard her, and
 Emmie had past away

CLXXIX

LAMENT

' Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah, my child,
 My one sweet child, whom I shall see no more !
 For now will cruel Ida keep her back ,
 And either she will die from want of care,
 Or sicken with ill-usage, when they say
 The child is hers—for every little fault,
 The child is hers , and they will beat my girl
 Remembering her mother : O my flower !
 Or they will take her, they will make her hard,
 And she will pass me by in after-life
 With some cold reverence worse than were she
 dead.
 Ill mother that I was to leave her there,
 To lag behind, scared by the cry they made,
 The horror of the shame among them all :

But I will go and sit beside the doors,
 And make a wild petition night and day,
 Until they hate to hear me like a wind
 Wailing for ever, till they open to me,
 And lay my little blossom at my feet,
 My babe, my sweet Aglaia, my one child :
 And I will take her up and go my way,
 And satisfy my soul with kissing her
 Ah ! what might that man not deserve of me
 Who gave me back my child ? '

CLXX .

THE LITTLE GRAVE

As thro' the land at eve we went,
 And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
 We fell out, my wife and I,
 O we fell out, I know not why,
 And kiss'd again with tears
 And blessings on the falling out
 That all the more endears,
 When we fall out with those we love
 And kiss again with tears !
 For when we came where lies the child
 We lost in other years,
 There above the little grave,
 O there above the little grave,
 We kiss'd again with tears.

JOHN SWANWICK DRENNAN

CLXXXI

ANGELS

Angels embrace us daily and obey ;
 We call them ' children,' and account our own ;
 Find they had wings when they have fled away,
 And know they were of Heaven when thither
 gone.

HENRY ALFORD

CLXXXII

HOLY BAPTISM

In token that thou shalt not fear
Christ crucified to own,
We print the Cross upon thee here,
And stamp thee His alone.

In token that thou shalt not blush
To glory in His name,
We blazon here upon thy front
His glory and His shame.

In token that thou shalt not flinch
Christ's quarrel to maintain,
But 'neath His Banner manfully
Firm at thy post remain ,

In token that thou too shalt tread
The path He travelled by,
Endure the Cross, despise the shame,
And sit thee down on high ,

Thus outwardly and visibly
We seal thee for His own ,
And may the brow that wears His Cross
Hereafter share His Crown.

WILLIAM MILLER

CLXXXIII

WILLIE WINKIE

Wee Willie Winkie rins through the town,
Up stairs and doon stairs in his nicht-gown,
Tirling at the window, crying at the lock,
'Are the weans in their bed, for it's now ter
o'clock ?'

' Hey, Willie Winkie, are ye coming ben ?
 The cat's singing gre' thrums to the sleeping hen,
 The dog's spelder'd on the floor, and disna gi'e
 a cheep,
 But here's a waukrife laddie ! that winna fa'
 asleep.'

Anything but sleep, you rogue ! glow'ring like
 the moon,
 Rattling in an airn iug wi' an airn spoon,
 Rumbling, tumbling round about, crawling like
 a cock,
 Skirling like a kenna-what, wauk'ning sleeping
 folk.

' Hey, Willie Winkie,—the wean's in a creel !
 Wambling aff a bodie's knee like a very eel,
 Rugging at the cat's lug, and ravelling a' her
 thrums—
 Hey, Willie Winkie,—see, there he comes ! '

Wearied is the mither that has a stoorie wean,
 A wee stumpie stoussie, that canna rin his lane,
 That has a battle aye wi' sleep before he'll close
 an e'e—
 But a kiss frae aff his rosy lips gi'es strength
 anew to me.

ROBERT BROWNING

CLXXXIV

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

A Picture at Fano

Dear and great Angel, wouldst thou only leave
 That child, when thou hast done with him,
 for me !
 Let me sit all the day here, that when eve
 Shall find performed thy special ministry,
 And time come for departure, thou, suspending

Thy flight, mayst see another child for tending,
Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,
From where thou standest now, to where I
gaze,
—And suddenly my head is covered o'er
With those wings, white above the child who
prays
Now on that tomb — and I shall feel thee
guarding
Me, out of all the world, for me, discarding
Yon heaven thy home, that waits and opes
its door

I would not look up thither past thy head
Because the door opes, like that child, I know,
For I should have thy gracious face instead,
Thou bird of God! And wilt thou bend me
low

Like him, and lay, like his, my hands together,
And lift them up to pray, and gently tether
Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garment's
spread?

If this was ever granted, I would rest
My head beneath thine, while thy healing
hands
Close-covered both my eyes beside thy breast,
Pressing the brain, which too much thought
expands,
Back to its proper size again, and smoothing
Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,
And all lay quiet, happy and suppressed.

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired!
I think how I should view the earth and skies
And sea, when once again my brow was bared
After thy healing, with such different eyes.
O world, as God has made it! All is beauty:
And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.
What further may be sought for or declared?

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach
 (Alfred, dear friend!)—that little child to pray,
 Holding the little hands up, each to each
 Pressed gently,—with his own head turned
 away
 Over the earth where so much lay before him
 Of work to do, though heaven was opening o'er
 him,
 And he was left at Fano by the beach
 We were at Fano, and three times we went
 To sit and see him in his chapel there,
 And drink his beauty to our soul's content
 —My angel with me too and since I care
 For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power
 And glory comes this picture for a dower,
 Fraught with a pathos so magnificent)—
 And since he did not work thus earnestly
 At all times, and has else endured some wrong—
 I took one thought his picture struck from me,
 And spread it out, translating it to song
 My love is here Where are you, dear old friend?
 How rolls the Wairoa at your world's far end?
 This is Ancona, yonder is the sea.

CLXXXV

PIPPA'S SONG

Overhead the tree-tops meet,
 Flowers and grass spring 'neath one's feet;
 There was nought above me, nought below,
 My childhood had not learned to know
 For, what are the voices of birds
 —Ay, and of beasts,—but words, our words,
 Only so much more sweet?
 The knowledge of that with my life begun.
 But I had so near made out the sun,
 And counted your stars, the seven and one,
 Like the fingers of my hand
 Nay, I could all but understand

Wherefore through heaven the white moon
 ranges ,
 And just when out of her soft fifty changes
 No unfamiliar face might overlook me—
 Suddenly God took me.

AUBREY DE VERE

CLXXXVI

*A CONVENT SCHOOL IN A
 CORRUPT CITY*

Hark how they laugh, those children at their
 sport !
 O'er all this city vast, that knows not sleep,
 Labour and sin their ceaseless vigil keep .
 Yet hither still good angels make resort.
 Innocence here and Mirth a single fort
 Maintain . and though in many a snake-like
 sweep
 Corruption round the weedy walls doth creep,
 Its track not yet hath slimed this sunny court.
 Glory to God, who so the world hath framed
 That in all places children more abound
 Than they by whom Humanity is shamed !
 Children outnumber men . and millions die—
 Who knows not this ?—in blameless infancy,
 Sowing with innocence our sin-stained ground

EMILY BRONTË

CLXXXVII

TELL ME, TELL ME, SMILING CHILD

Tell me, tell me, smiling child,
 What the past is like to thee
 —An autumn evening, soft and mild,
 With a wind that sighs mournfully.

Tell me what is the present hour
—A green and flowery spray,
Where the young bird sits gathering its power
To mount and fly away.

And what is the future, happy one ?
—A sea beneath a cloudless sun :
A mighty, glorious, dazzling sea
Stretching into infinity.

GEORGE ELIOT

CLXXXVIII

BROTHER AND SISTER

I cannot choose but think upon the time
When our two lives grew like two buds that kiss
At lightest thrill from the bee's swinging chime,
Because the one so near the other is

He was the elder and a little man
Of forty inches, bound to show no dread,
And I the girl that puppy-like now ran,
Now lagged behind my brother's larger tread.

I held him wise, and when he talked to me
Of snakes and birds, and which God loved the
best,

I thought his knowledge marked the boundary
Where men grew blind, though angels knew the
rest.

If he said ' Hush ! ' I tried to hold my breath.
Wherever he said ' Come ! ' I stepped in faith.

Long years have left their writing on my brow,
But yet the freshness and the dew-fed beam
Of those young mornings are about me now,
When we two wandered toward the far-off
stream

With rod and line Our basket held a store
Baked for us only, and I thought with joy

That I should have my share, though he had
more,
Because he was the elder and a boy.

The firmaments of daisies since to me
Have had those mornings in their opening eyes,
The bunchèd cowslip's pale transparency
Carries that sunshine of sweet memories

And wild-rose branches take their finest scent
From those blest hours of infantine content . . .

Our meadow-path had memorable spots .
One where it bridged a tiny rivulet,
Deep hid by tangled blue forget-me-nots ;
And all along the waving grasses met

My little palm, or nodded to my cheek,
When flowers with upturned faces gazing drew
My wonder downward, seeming all to speak
With eyes of souls that dumbly heard and knew.

Then came the copse, where wild things rushed
unseen,
And black-scathed grass betrayed the past abode
Of mystic gypsies, who still lurked between
Me and each hidden distance of the road

A gypsy once had startled me at play,
Blotting with her dark smile my sunny day.

Our brown canal was endless to my thought ,
And on its banks I sat in dreamy peace,
Unknowing how the good I loved was wrought,
Untroubled by the fear that it would cease

Slowly the barges floated into view
Rounding a grassy hill, to me sublime
With some Unknown beyond it, whither flew
The parting cuckoo toward a fresh spring time

The wide-arched bridge, the scented elder-
flowers,
The wondrous watery rings that died too soon,
The echoes of the quarry, the still hours
With white robe sweeping on the shadeless noon,

Were but my growing self, are part of me,
My present Past, my root of piety . .

We had the self-same world, enlarged for each
By loving difference of girl and boy
The fruit that hung on high beyond my reach
He plucked for me, and oft he must employ

A measuring glance to guide my tiny shoe
Where lay firm stepping-stones, or call to mind
' This thing I like my sister may not do,
For she is little, and I must be kind '

Thus boyish Will the nobler mastery learned
Where inward vision over impulse reigns,
Widening its life with separate life discerned,
A Like unlike, a Self that self-restrains

His years with others must the sweeter be
For those brief days he spent in loving me.

His sorrow was my sorrow, and his joy
Sent little leaps and laughs through all my
frame ,

My doll seemed lifeless, and no girlish toy
Had any reason, when my brother came

I knelt with him at marbles, marked his fling
Cut the ringed stem and make the apple drop,
Or watched him winding close the spiral string
That looped the orbits of the humming top.

Grasped by such fellowship my vagrant thought
Ceased with dream-fruit dream-wishes to fulfil ,
My aery-picturing fantasy was taught
Subjection to the harder, truer skill

That seeks with deeds to grave a thought-
tracked line,

And by ' What is,' ' What will be ' to define

School parted us , we never found again
That childish world where our two spirits mingled
Like scents from varying roses that remain
One sweetness, nor can evermore be singled.

Yet the twin habit of that early time
 Lingered for long about the heart and tongue :
 We had been natives of one nappy clime,
 And its dear accent to our utterance clung.

Till the dire years whose awful name is Change
 Had grasped our souls still yearning in divorce,
 And pitiless shaped them in two forms that range
 Two elements which sever their life's course.

But were another childhood-world my share,
 I would be born a little sister there.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

CLXXXIX

A FAREWELL

My fairest child, I have no song to give you ;
 No lark could pipe to skies so dull and grey :
 Yet, ere we part, one lesson I can leave you
 For every day

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever ;
 Do noble things, not dream them, all day
 long .
 And so make life, death, and that vast for-ever
 One grand, sweet song.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

CXC

TO THE DANDELION

Dear common flower, that grow'st beside the
 way,
 Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,
 First pledge of blithesome May,
 Which children pluck, and, full of pride uphold.

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High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample round
May match in wealth, thou art more dear
to me
Than all the prouder summer-blooms may
be. . . .

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked
with thee,
The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,
Who, from the dark old tree
Beside the door, sang clearly all day long,
And I, secure in childish piety,
Listened as if I heard an angel sing
With news from heaven, which he could bring
Fresh every day to my untainted ears,
When birds and flowers and I were happy
peers.

How like a prodigal doth Nature seem
When thou, for all thy gold, so common art !
Thou teachest me to deem
More sacredly of every human heart,
Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam
Of heaven, and could some wondrous secret
show,
Did we but pay the love we owe,
And with a child's undoubting wisdom look
On all these living pages of God's book.

CXCI

THE FIRST SNOW-FALL

The snow had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white . . .

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,

And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,
Like brown leaves whirling by

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn,
Where a little headstone stood,
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, ' Father, who makes it snow ? '
And I told of the good All-father
Who cares for us here below

Again I looked at the snow-fall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar of our deep-plunged woe

And again to the child I whispered,
' The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall ! '

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her ;
And she, kissing back, could not know
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.

WALT WHITMAN

CXCII

THERE WAS A CHILD WENT FORTH

There was a child went forth every day,
And the first object that he look'd upon, that
object he became,

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And that object became part of him for the day
or a certain part of the day,
Or for many years or stretching cycles of years.

The early lilacs became part of this child,
The grass and white and red morning-glories,
and white and red clover, and the song of
the phoebe-bird,

And the Third-month lambs and the sow's pink-
faint litter, and the mare's foal and the
cow's calf,

And the noisy brood of the barnyard or by the
mire of the pond-side,

And the fish suspending themselves so curiously
below there, and the beautiful curious
liquid,

And the water plants with their graceful flat
heads, all became part of him

The field-sprouts of Fourth-month and Fifth-
month became part of him,

Winter-grain sprouts and those of the light-
yellow corn, and the esculent roots of the
garden,

And the apple-trees cover'd with blossoms and
the fruit afterward, and wood-berries, and
the commonest weeds by the road,

And the old drunkard staggering home from the
outhouse of the tavern whence he had lately
risen,

And the schoolmistress that pass'd on her way
to the school,

And the friendly boys that pass'd, and the
quarrelsome boys,

And the 'tidy and fresh-cheek'd girls, and the
barefoot negro boy and girl,

And all the changes of city and country wher-
ever he went.

His own parents, he that had father'd him and
she that had conceiv'd him in her womb
and birth'd him,

They gave this child more of themselves than that,
They gave him afterward every day, they became
part of him. .

The mother at home quietly placing the dishes
on the supper-table,

The mother with mild words, clean cap and
gown, a wholesome odour falling off her
person and clothes as she walks by,

The father, strong, self-sufficient, manly, mean,
anger'd, unjust,

The blow, the quick loud word, the tight bar-
gain, the crafty lure,

The family usages, the language, the company, the
furniture, the yearning and swelling heart,

Affection that will not be gainsay'd, the sense
of what is real, the thought if after all it
should prove unreal,

The doubts of day-time and the doubts of night-
time, the curious whether and how,

Whether that which appears so is so, or is it all
flashes and specks ?

Men and women crowding fast in the streets, if
they are not flashes and specks what are
they ?

The streets themselves and the façades of houses,
and goods in the windows,

Vehicles, teams, the heavy-plank'd wharves, the
huge crossing at the ferries,

The village on the highland seen from afar at
sunset, the river between,

Shadows, aureola and mist, the light falling on
roofs and gables of white or brown two miles
off,

The schooner near by sleepily dropping down
the tide, the little boat slack-tow'd astern,

The hurrying tumbling waves, quick-broken
crests, slapping,

The strata of colour'd clouds, the long bar of
maroon-tint away solitary by itself, the
spread of purity it lies motionless in,

The horizon's edge, the flying sea-crow, the
 fragrance of salt marsh and shore mud,
 These became part of that child who went forth
 every day, and who now goes, and will
 always go forth every day.

JEAN INGELow

CXCIII

SEVEN TIMES ONE

There's no dew left on the daisies and clover,
 There's no rain left in heaven :
 I've said my ' seven times ' over and over,
 Seven times one are seven.

I am old, so old, I can write a letter ;
 My birthday lessons are done ,
 The lambs play always, they know no better ,
 They are only one times one

O moon ! in the night I have seen you sailing
 And shining so round and low ,
 You were bright ! ah bright ! but your light is
 failing—

You are nothing now but a bow

You moon, have you done something wrong in
 heaven

That God has hidden your face ?
 I hope if you have you will soon be forgiven,
 And shine again in your place.

O velvet bee, you're a dusty fellow,
 You've powdered your legs with gold !
 O brave marsh marybuds, rich and yellow,
 Give me your money to hold !

O columbine, open your folded wrapper,
 Where two twin turtle-doves dwell !
 O cuckoo-pint, toll me the purple clapper
 That hangs in your clear green bell !

And show me your nest with the young ones in it ;
 I will not steal them away ,
 I am old ! you may trust me, linnet, linnet—
 I am seven times one to-day.

CXCIV

THE SNOWDROP MONUMENT

(In Lichfield Cathedral)

Marvels of sleep grown cold !
 Who hath not longed to fold
 With pitying ruth, forgetful of their bliss,
 Those cherub forms that lie,
 With none to watch them nigh,
 Or touch the silent lips with one warm human
 kiss ?

What ! they are left alone
 All night with graven stone,
 Pillars and arches that above them meet ,
 While through those windows high
 The journeying stars can spy,
 And dim blue moonbeams drop on their un-
 covered feet !

O cold ! yet look again,
 There is a wandering vein
 Traced in the hand where those white snowdrops
 lie

Let her wrapt dreamy smile
 The wondering heart beguile,
 That almost thinks to hear a calm contented sigh.

What silence dwells between
 Those severed lips serene !
 The rapture of sweet waiting breathes and grows ;
 What trance-like peace is shed
 On her reclining head,
 And e'en on listless feet what languor of repose !

Angels of joy and love
 Lean softly from above

And whisper to her sweet and marvellous things ;
 Tell of the golden gate
 That opened wide doth wait,
 And shadow her dim sleep with their celestial
 wings

Hearing of that blest shore
 She thinks on earth no more,
 Contented to forego this wintry land
 She hath nor thought nor care
 But to rest calmly there,
 And hold the snowdrops pale that blossom in
 her hand

But on the other face
 Broodeth a mournful grace ,
 This had foreboding thoughts beyond her years ,
 While sinking thus to sleep
 She saw her mother weep,
 And could not lift her hand to dry those heart-
 sick tears

Could not—but failing lay,
 Sighed her young life away,
 And let her arm drop down in listless rest,
 Too weary on that bed
 To turn her dying head,
 Or fold the little sister nearer to her breast.

Yet this is faintly told
 On features fair and cold,
 A look of calm surprise, of mild regret,
 As if with life oppressed
 She turned her to her rest,
 But felt her mother's love and looked not to
 forget

How wistfully they close,
 Sweet eyes, to their repose !
 How quietly declines the placid brow !
 The young lips seem to say,
 ' I have wept much to-day,
 And felt some bitter pains, but they are over
 now.'

Sleep ! there are left below
 Many who pine to go,
 Many who lay it to their chastened souls
 That gloomy days draw nigh,
 And they are blest who die,
 For this green world grows worse the longer that
 she rolls.

And as for me, I know
 A little of her woe,
 Her yearning want doth in my soul abide,
 And sighs of them that weep,
 ' O put us soon to sleep,
 For when we wake—with Thee—we shall be
 satisfied.'

DORA GREENWELL

CXCv

CHILDHOOD'S WORLD

My world was then like His that first
 A happy garden knew,
 Unworn, and fresh, and glistening bright
 With shining spheres of dew ,
 My soul was full of light that passed
 As through a tintured pane
 In warm and vermeil hues, and cast
 On all its gorgeous stain ;
 The dial on its grassy mound
 That silent marked the hours,
 (Time's footfall then awoke no sound
 That only trod on flowers)
 The sun-flowers and the moon-flow'ers
 (These were lilies white and tall),
 The ancient griffins that looked down
 Upon me from the wall ,
 These were for tokens unto me
 And signs, they seemed to pass

Into my life as then I lay
 At noon-day on the grass,
 And twined a wondrous history
 Slow twisting, branch and stem,
 My garlands, binding all the while
 My Being up with them ,
 And I knew that in the wild-wood
 'Mong the meadows, on the hill
 Were flowers, but unto childhood
 The best were nearest still ,
 And I sometimes thought 'out yonder
 I will seek for blossoms too,'
 But turned again the fonder
 To those that round me grew ;

Soon told were childhood's treasures—
 The childish world was small,
 But its wonders and its pleasures
 Were its own—it held them *all* !

This was the home of childhood ,
 As in a Fairy Ring
 Within the circle of its hearth
 Was drawn each cherished thing ,
 I sent no restless thought beyond,
 I looked not to the door,
 If the whole world had entered there
 It could not give me more
 Than those that sat around it—all
 I knew of good and wise
 Spoke for me then upon their lips,
 And lived within their eyes ;
 I had no Future then, no Past,
 My life was unto me
 But one bright *Now*—the happiness
 That has no History !

Soon filled was childhood's measure,
 The childish heart was small,
 Yet they that made its treasure
 Were its own—it held them *all* !

MATTHEW ARNOLD

CXCVI

ISEULT'S CHILDREN

Under the glittering hollies Iseult stands,
Watching her children play, their little hands
Are busy gathering spars of quartz, and streams
Of stagshorn for their hats, anon, with screams
Of mad delight they drop their spoils, and bound
Among the holly-clumps and broken ground,
Racing full speed, and startling in their rush
The fell-fares and the speckled missel-thrush
Out of their glossy coverts,—but when now
Their cheeks were flush'd, and over each hot
brow,

Under the feather'd hats of the sweet pair,
In blinding masses shower'd the golden hair—
Then Iseult call'd them to her, and the three
Cluster'd under the holly-screen, and she
Told them an old-world Breton history

Warm in their mantles wrapt, the three stood
there,

Under the hollies, in the clear still air—
Mantles with those rich furs deep glistering
Which Venice ships do from swart Egypt bring
Long they stay'd still—then, pacing at their ease,
Moved up and down under the glossy trees
But still, as they pursued their warm dry road,
From Iseult's lips the unbroken story flow'd,
And still the children listen'd, their blue eyes
Fix'd on their mother's face in wide surprise;
Nor did their looks stray once to the sea-side,
Nor to the brown heaths round them, bright and
wide,

Nor to the snow, which, though 'twas all away
From the open heath, still by the hedgerows lay,
Nor to the shining sea-fowl, that with screams
Bore up from where the bright Atlantic gleams,

Swooping to landward, nor to where, quite clear,
 The fell-fares settled on the thickets near
 And they would still have listen'd, till dark night
 Came keen and chill down on the heather bright,
 But, when the red glow on the sea grew cold,
 And the grey turrets of the castle old
 Look'd sternly through the frosty evening-air,
 Ther. Iseult took by the hand those children fair,
 And brought her tale to an end, and found the
 path,
 And led them home over the darkening heath. . . .

Sweet flower ! thy children's eyes
 Are not more innocent than thine

But they sleep in shelter'd rest,
 Like helpless birds in the warm nest,
 On the castle's southern side,
 Where feebly comes the mournful roar
 Of buffeting wind and surging tide
 Through many a room and corridor.
 —Full on their window the moon's ray
 Makes their chamber as bright as day.
 It shines upon the blank white walls,
 And on the snowy pillow falls,
 And on two angel-heads doth play
 Turn'd to each other—the eyes closed,
 The lashes on the cheeks reposed
 Round each sweet brow the cap close-set
 Hardly lets peep the golden hair,
 Through the soft-open'd lips the air
 Scarcely moves the coverlet
 One little wandering arm is thrown
 At random on the counterpane,
 And often the fingers close in haste
 As if their baby-owner chased
 The butterflies again
 This stir they have and this alone ;
 But else they are so still !
 —Ah, tired madcaps ! you lie still,
 But were you at the window now,
 To look forth on the fairy sight

Of your illumined haunts by night,
To see the park-glades where you play
Far lovelier than they are by day,
To see the sparkle on the eaves,
And upon every giant-bough
Of those old oaks, whose wet red leaves
Are jewell'd with bright drops of rain—
How would your voices run again !
And far beyond the sparkling trees
Of the castle-park one sees
The bare heaths spreading, clear as day,
Moor behind moor, far, far away,
Into the heart of Brittany
And here and there, lock'd by the land,
Long inlets of smooth glittering sea,
And many a stretch of watery sand
All shining in the white moon-beams—
But you see fairer in your dreams ! . . .

Yes, it is lonely for her in her hall.
The children, and the grey-hair'd seneschal,
Her women, and Sir Tristram's agèd hound,
Are there the sole companions to be found
But these she loves, and noisier life than this
She would find ill to bear, weak as she is
She has her children, too, and night and day
Is with them ; and the wide heaths where they
play,
The holmies, and the cliff, and the sea-shore,
The sand, the sea-birds, and the distant sails,
These are to her dear as to them ; the tales
With which this day the children she beguiled
She gleaned from Breton grandames, when a
child,
In every hut along this sea-coast wild ;
She herself loves them still, and, when they are
told,
Can forget all to hear them, as of old. . . .

CXCVII

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

Come, dear children, let us away ;
 Down and away below !
 Now my brothers call from the bay,
 Now the great winds shoreward blow,
 Now the salt tides seaward flow ,
 Now the wild white horses play,
 Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
 Children dear, let us away !
 This way, this way !

Call her once before you go—
 Call once yet !
 In a voice that she will know :
 ‘ Margaret ! Margaret ! ’
 Children’s voices should be dear
 (Call once more) to a mother’s ear ;
 Children’s voices, wild with pain—
 Surely she will come again !
 Call her once and come away ,
 This way, this way !
 ‘ Mother dear, we cannot stay !
 The wild white horses foam and fret.’
 Margaret ! Margaret !

Come, dear children, come away down ,
 Call no more !
 One last look at the white-wall’d town,
 And the little grey church on the windy shore ;
 Then come down !
 She will not come though you call all day ;
 Come away, come away !

Children dear, was it yesterday
 We heard the sweet bells over the bay ?
 In the caverns where we lay,
 Through the surf and through the swell,

The far-off sound of a silver bell ?
 Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
 Where the winds are all asleep ,
 Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
 Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
 Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
 Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground ;
 Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
 Dry their mail, and bask in the brine ,
 Where great whales come sailing by,
 Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
 Round the world for ever and aye ?
 When did music come this way ?
 Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, was it yesterday
 (Call yet once) that she went away ?
 Once she sate with you and me,
 On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
 And the youngest sate on her knee
 She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well,
 When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
 She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green
 sea ,

She said, ' I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
 In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
 'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me !
 And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with
 thee '

I said, ' Go up, dear heart, through the waves
 Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-
 caves ! '
 She smiled, she went up through the surf in the
 bay.

Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, were we long alone ?
 ' The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan ;
 Long prayers,' I said, ' in the world they say ;
 Come ! ' I said, and we rose through the surf in
 the bay
 We went up the beach, by the sandy down

Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-wall'd
 town,
 Through the narrow paved streets, where all
 was still,
 To the little grey church on the windy hill
 From the church came a murmur of folk at their
 prayers,
 But we stood without in the cold-blowing airs
 We climb'd on the graves, on the stones worn
 with rains,
 And we gazed up the aisle through the small
 leadèd panes
 She sate by the pillar, we saw her clear:
 'Margaret, hie! come quick, we are here
 Dear heart,' I said, 'we are long alone
 The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan'
 But, ah, she gave me never a look,
 For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book!
 Loud prays the priest, shut stands the door.
 Come away, children, call no more!
 Come away, come down, call no more!

 Down, down, down!
 Down to the depths of the sea!
 She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
 Singing most joyfully
 Hark what she sings 'O joy, O joy,
 For the humming street, and the child with its toy!
 For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well,
 For the wheel where I spun,
 And the blessèd light of the sun!
 And so she sings her fill,
 Singing most joyfully,
 Till the shuttle falls from her hand,
 And the whizzing wheel stands still
 She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
 And over the sand at the sea,
 And her eyes are set in a stare;
 And anon there breaks a sigh,
 And anon there drops a tear,
 From a sorrow-clouded eye,

And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children !
Come children, come down !
The hoarse wind blows coldly ,
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door ,
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar

We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl
Singing, ' Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she '
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea '

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low ,
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starr'd with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanch'd sands a gloom ;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town ;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down
Singing, ' There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she '
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea.'

CECIL FRANCES ALEXANDER

CXCVIII

THE CHILD JESUS

Once in royal David's city
 Stood a lowly cattle shed,
 Where a Mother laid her Baby
 In a manger for His bed,
 Mary was that Mother mild,
 Jesus Christ her little Child

He came down to earth from Heaven
 Who is God and Lord of all,
 And His shelter was a stable,
 And His cradle was a stall,
 With the poor, and mean, and lowly,
 Lived on earth our Saviour Holy

And through all His wondrous Childhood
 He would honour and obey,
 Love, and watch the lowly Maiden,
 In whose gentle arms He lay,
 Christian children all must be
 Mild, obedient, good as He.

For He is our childhood's pattern,
 Day by day like us He grew,
 He was little, weak, and helpless,
 Tears and smiles like us He knew;
 And He feeleth for our sadness,
 And He shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see Him,
 Through His own redeeming love,
 For that Child so dear and gentle
 Is our Lord in Heav'n above;
 And He leads His children on
 To the place where He is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
 With the oxen standing by,

We shall see Him , but in Heav'n
 Set at God's right hand on high ;
 When like stars His children crown'd
 All in white shall wait around.

WILLIAM BRICHTY RANDS

CXCIX

THE FLOWERS

When Love arose in heart and deed
 To wake the world to greater joy,
 ' What can she give me now ? ' said Greed,
 Who thought to win some costly toy
 He rose, he ran, he stoop'd, he clutch'd ,
 And soon the Flowers, that Love let fall,
 In Greed's hot grasp were fray'd and smutch'd,
 And Greed said, ' Flowers ! Can this be all ? '
 He flung them down and went his way,
 He cared no jot for thyme or rose ,
 But boys and girls came out to play,
 And some took these and some took those—
 Red, blue, and white, and green and gold .
 And at their touch the dew return'd,
 And all the bloom a thousandfold—
 So red, so ripe, the roses burn'd !

CC

PRAISE AND LOVE

Tell me, Praise, and tell me, Love,
 What you both are thinking of ?
 ' O, we think,' said Love, said Praise,
 ' Now of children and their ways.'
 Give me of your cup to drink,
 Praise, and tell me what you think.

' O, I think of crowns of gold
For the clever and the bold.'

Then I turn'd to Love, and said—
Love was glowing heavenly-red—

Give me of your cup to drink,
Love, and tell me what you think :

Let me taste your bitter-sweet ,
Who are those that kiss your feet ?

Love look'd up—I read her eyes,
They were stars and they were skies.

Clinging to her garment's hem,
Smiling as I look'd at them,

There were children scarr'd and halt,
Children weeping for a fault ,

Those who scarcely dared to raise
Doubtful eyes to smiling Praise

Love look'd round, and Praise and Pride
Brought their glad ones to her side

' Yea, these too ' ' she said, or sang ;
And the world with music rang

WILLIAM (JOHNSON) CORY

CCI

IN AFTER YEARS

Oh, earlier shall the rosebuds blow,
' In after years, those happier years,
And children weep, when we lie low,
Far fewer tears, far softer tears

Oh, true shall boyish laughter ring,
Like tinkling chimes, in kinder times !
And merrier shall the maiden sing :
And I not there, and I not there.

Like lightning in the summer night
 Their mirth shall be, so quick and free ;
 And oh ! the flash of their delight
 I shall not see, I may not see
 In deeper dream, with wider range,
 Those eyes shall shine, but not on mine ;
 Unmoved, unblest, by worldly change,
 The dead must rest, the dead shall rest.

COVENTRY PATMORE

CCII

REGINA COELI

Say, did his sisters wonder what could Joseph see
 In a mild, silent little Maid like thee ?
 And was it awful, in that narrow house,
 With God for Babe and Spouse ?
 Nay, like thy simple, female sort, each one
 Apt to find Him in Husband and in Son,
 Nothing to thee came strange in this
 Thy wonder was but wondrous bliss :
 Wondrous, for, though
 True Virgin lives not but does know,
 (Howbeit none ever yet confess'd,)
 That God lies really in her breast,
 Of thine He made His special nest !
 And so
 All mothers worship little feet,
 And kiss the very ground they've trod ;
 But, ah, thy little Baby sweet
 Who was indeed thy God !

CCIII

THE TOYS

My little Son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes
 And moved and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,

Having my law the seventh time disobey'd,
 I struck him, and dismiss'd
 With hard words and unkiss'd ;
 —His Mother, who was patient, being dead
 Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,
 I visited his bed,
 But found him slumbering deep,
 With darken'd eyelids, and their lashes yet
 From his late sobbing wet
 And I, with moan,
 Kissing away his tears, left others of my own ;
 For, on a table drawn beside his head,
 He had put, within his reach,
 A box of counters and a red-vein'd stone,
 A piece of glass abraded by the beach,
 And six or seven shells,
 A bottle with bluebells,
 And two French copper coins, ranged there with
 careful art,
 To comfort his sad heart

So when that night I pray'd
 To God, I wept, and said :
 Ah ! when at last we lie with trancèd breath,
 Not vexing Thee in death,
 And Thou rememberest of what toys
 We made our joys,
 How weakly understood
 Thy great commanded good,—
 Then, fatherly not less
 Than I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,
 Thou'lt leave Thy wrath, and say,
 ' I will be sorry for their childishness.'

CCIV

' IF I WERE DEAD '

' If I were dead, you'd sometimes say, Poor
 Child ! '
 The dear lips quiver'd as they spake,

And the tears brake
From eyes which, not to grieve me, brightly
 smiled
Poor Child, poor Child !
I seem to hear your laugh, your talk, your
 song
It is not true that Love will do no wrong.
Poor Child !
And did you think, when you so cried and smiled,
How I, in lonely nights, should lie awake,
And of those words your full avengers make ?
Poor Child, poor Child !
And now, unless it be
That sweet amends thrice told are come to thee,
O God, have Thou *no* mercy upon me !
Poor Child !

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

CCV

HALF-WAKING

I thought it was the little bed
 I slept in long ago ,
A straight white curtain at the head,
 And two smooth knobs below

I thought I saw the nursery fire,
 And in a chair well-known
My mother sat, and did not tire
 With reading all alone

If I should make the slightest sound
 To show that I'm awake,
She'd rise, and lap the blankets round,
 My pillow softly shake ;

Kiss me, and turn my face to see
 The shadows on the wall,
And then sing *Rousseau's Dream* to me,
 Till fast asleep I fall

But this is not my little bed,
 That time is far away ,
 'Mong strangers cold I live instead,
 From dreary day to day

CCVI

A MEMORY

Four ducks³ on a pond,
 A grass-bank beyond,
 A blue sky of spring,
 White clouds on the wing
 What a little thing
 To remember for years—
 To remember with tears¹

GEORGE MACDONALD

CCVII

BABY

Where did you come from, Baby dear ?
 Out of the everywhere into here
 Where did you get those eyes so blue ?
 Out of the sky as I came through
 What makes the light in them sparkle and spin ?
 Some of the starry spikes left in
 Where did you get that little tear ?
 I found it waiting when I got here
 What makes your forehead so smooth and high ?
 A soft hand stroked it as I went by.
 What makes your cheek like a warm white rose ?
 I saw something better than anyone knows.
 Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss ?
 Three angels gave me at once a kiss.

Where did you get this pearly ear ?
God spoke, and it came out to hear.

Where did you get those arms and hands ?
Love made itself into bonds and bands.

Feet, whence did you come, you darling things ?
From the same box as the cherub's wings

How did they all just come to be you ?
God thought about me, and so I grew

But how did you come to us, you dear ?
God thought about you, and so I am here.

SYDNEY DOBELL

CCVIII

THE LITTLE GIRL'S SONG

Do not mind my crying, Papa, I am not crying
for pain
Do not mind my shaking, Papa, I am not shaking
with fear,
Tho' the wild wild wind is hideous to hear,
And I see the snow and the rain
When will you come back again,
Papa, Papa ?

Somebody else that you love, Papa,
Somebody else that you dearly love
Is weary, like me, because you're away.
Sometimes I see her lips tremble and move,
And I seem to know what they're going to say ;
And every day, and all the long day,
I long to cry, ' Oh Mamma, Mamma,
When will Papa come back again ? '
But before I can say it I see the pain
Creeping up on her white white cheek,
As the sweet sad sunshine creeps up the white
wall

And then I am sorry, and fear to speak,
 And slowly the pain goes out of her cheek,
 As the sad sweet sunshine goes from the wall.
 Oh, I wish I were grown up wise and tall,
 That I might throw my arms round her neck
 And say, 'Dear Mamma, oh, what is it all
 That I see and see and do not see
 In your white white face all the livelong day?'
 But she hides her grief from a child like me.
 When will you come back again,
 Papa, Papa?

Where were you going, Papa, Papa?
 All this long while have you been on the sea?
 When she looks as if she saw far away,
 Is she thinking of you, and what does she see?
 Are the white sails blowing,
 Are the blue men rowing,
 And are you standing on the high deck
 Where we saw you stand till the ship grew grey,
 And we watched and watched till the ship was a
 speck,
 And the dark came first to you, far away?
 I wish I could see what she can see,
 But she hides her grief from a child like me.
 When will you come back again,
 Papa, Papa?

Don't you remember, Papa, Papa?
 How we used to sit by the fire, all three,
 And she told me tales while I sat on her knee,
 And heard the winter winds roar down the street,
 And knock like men at the window pane,
 And the louder they roared, oh, it seemed more
 sweet
 To be warm and warm as we used to be,
 Sitting at night by the fire, all three?
 When will you come back again,
 Papa, Papa?

Papa, I like to sit by the fire;
 Why does she sit far away in the cold?

If I had but somebody wise and old,
That every day I might cry and say,
' Is she changed, do you think, or do I forget ?
Was she always as white as she is to-day ?
Did she never carry her head up higher ? '

Papa, Papa, if I could but know !
Do you think her voice was always so low ?
Did I always see what I seem to see
When I wake up at night and her pillow is wet ?
You used to say her hair it was gold—
It looks like silver to me.

But still she tells the same tale that she told,
She sings the same songs when I sit on her knee,
And the house goes on as it went long ago,
When we lived together, all three
Sometimes my heart seems to sink, Papa,
And I feel as if I could be happy no more
Is she changed, do you think, Papa,
Or did I dream she was brighter before ?
She makes me remember my snowdrop, Papa,
That I forgot in thinking of you,
The sweetest snowdrop that ever I knew !
But I put it out of the sun and rain
It was green and white when I put it away,
It had one sweet bell and green leaves four ,
It was green and white when I found it that day,
It had one pale bell and green leaves four,
But I was not glad of it any more
Was it changed, do you think, Papa,
Or did I dream it was brighter before ?

Do not mind my crying, Papa,
I am not crying for pain.
Do not mind my shaking, Papa,
I am not shaking for fear ,
Tho' the wild wild wind is hideous to hear,
And I see the snow and the rain.
When will you come back again,
Papa, Papa ?

FRANCIS TURNER^{*} PALGRAVE

CCIX

ON THE LOVE OF CHILDREN

To that green hill, the shepherds' haunt,
 Why speed the children's feet ?
 And who the Youth that sits alone,
 The clamorous flock to greet ?

His hands are laid above their heads,
 Their faces at His knee
 His looks are looks of love ; yet seem
 Something beyond to see

The simple townsmen cross the hill
 And bid the throng away,
 ' Nor press around the stranger youth,
 Nor by the fold delay.'

As one who smiles and wakes, He lifts
 A child upon His knee
 God's kingdom is of such as these ,
 So let them come to Me '

—Ah, Lord and Christ ! Thy perfect heart
 No fond excess could touch !
 But man's best strength is feebleness,
 And we may love too much !

Yet maim'd the man, or poor in blood,
 Who glows not with delight
 Whene'er the little ones go by
 In casual daily sight ,

Or when the child at mother's knee,
 His altar, lisps a prayer,
 And perfect faith, and utter love,
 And Christ Himself, is there ;

Or when the little hands are clasp'd
 To beg some baby grace,
 And all the beauty of the dawn
 Comes rose-red o'er the face :

Or when some elder one from sport
 Her smaller sister wiles,
 And two bright heads o'ershade the book ;
 Half study, and half smiles.

—Ah, Lord and Christ ! Thy perfect heart
 No fond excess could touch !
 Yet when that innocence we see,
 How can we love too much ?

They twine around our heart of hearts ;
 Their spell we seek in vain,—
 Go, ask the linnet why he sings,—
 He can but sing again !

To winter-life their bloom and breath
 Renew a later spring,
 O dewy roses of the dawn,
 Fresh from God's gardening !

Earth's treasures waste with use ; but Thine,
 O Lord ! by lessening grow
 From love's pure fount the more we take,
 The more the waters flow

How should we prize the things unseen,
 Not prizing what we see ?
 How turn away Thy little ones
 Without forbidding Thee ?

The Shepherd wills not we should stint
 Or count our kisses o'er ,
 Nor bids us love His lambs the less,
 But Him, Who loves them, more.

CCX

*MARGARET ROPER'S VISION OF HER
 FATHER, SIR THOMAS MORE*

The vision of her girlhood glinted by :—
 And how the father through their garden stray'd
 And, child with children, play'd
 And teased the rabbit-hutch, and fed the dove

Before him from above
 Alighting, in his visitation sweet,
 Led on by little hands, and eager feet.

Hence among those he stands,
 Elect ones, ever in whose ears the word
He that offends these little ones . . . is heard ;
 With love and kisses smiling-out commands,
 And all the tender hearts within his hands ,
 Seeing, in every child that goes, a flower
 From Eden's nursery bower,
 A little stray from Heaven, for reverence here
 Sent down, and comfort dear
 All care well paid for by one pure caress,
 And life made happy in their happiness.

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER

CCXI

LINKS WITH HEAVEN

Our God in Heaven, from that holy place,
 To each of us an angel guide has given ,
 But mothers of dead children have more grace,
 For they give angels to their God in Heaven.

How can a mother's heart feel cold or weary,
 Knowing her dearer self safe, happy, warm ?
 How can she feel her road too dark or dreary
 Who knows her treasure sheltered from the
 storm ?—

How can she sin ? *Our* hearts may be un-
 heeding—

Our God forgot, our holy Saints defied—
 But can a mother hear her dead child pleading,
 And thrust those little angel-hands aside ?—

Those little hands stretched down to draw her
 ever

Nearer to God by mother-love.—We all

Are blind and weak—yet surely *she* can never,
With such a stake in Heaven, fail or fall.

She knows that, when the mighty angels raise
Chorus in Heaven, one little silver tone
Is hers for ever—that one little praise,
One little, happy voice, is all her own.

We may not see her sacred crown of honour ;
But all the angels, flitting to and fro,
Pause smiling as they pass—they look upon her
As mother of an angel whom they know ;

One whom they nestling left at Mary's feet—
The children's place in Heaven—who softly
sings

A little chant to please them, slow and sweet,
Or smiling, strokes their little folded wings :

Or gives them her white lilies or her beads
To play with : yet, in spite of flower or song,
They often lift a wistful look, that pleads
And asks her why their mother stays so long.

Then our dear Queen makes answer, she will call
Her very soon : meanwhile they are beguiled
To wait, and listen while she tells them all
The story of her Jesus as a child.

Ah ! saints in Heaven may pray with earnest will
And pity for their weak and erring brothers :
Yet there is prayer in Heaven more tender still—
The little children pleading for their mothers.

RICHARD WILTON

CCXII

MY GRANDCHILDREN AT CHURCH

Bright Dorothy, with eyes of blue,
And serious Dickie, brave as fair,
Crossing to Church you oft may view
When no one but myself is there :

First to the belfry they repair,
 And, while to t'le long ropes they cling,
 And make believe to call to prayer,
 For angels' ears the bells they ring.

Next, seated gravely in a pew
 A pulpit homily they share,
 Meet for my little flock of two,
 Pointed and plain, as they can bear ;
 Then venture up the pulpit stair,
 Pray at the desk or gaily sing :
 O sweet child-life, without a care—
 For angels' ears the bells they ring.

Dear little ones, the early dew
 Of holy infancy they wear,
 And lift to Heaven a face as true
 As flowers that breathe the morning air ;
 Whate'er they do, where'er they fare,
 They can command an angel's wing .
 Their voices have a music rare,—
 For angels' ears the bells they ring.

O parents, of your charge beware ;
 Their angels stand before the King :
 In work, play, sleep, and everywhere
 For angels' ears the bells they ring.

THOMAS EDWARD BROWN

CCXIII

BETWEEN OUR FOLDING LIPS

Between our folding lips
 God slips
 An embryo life, and goes ;
 And this becomes your rose.
 We love, God makes : in our sweet mirth
 God spies occasion for a birth.
Then is it His, or is it ours ?
 I know not—He is fond of flowers.

CCXIV

THE PRAYERS

I was in Heaven one day when all the prayers
 Came in, and angels bore them up the stairs
 Unto a place where he,
 Who was ordained such ministry,
 Should sort them, so that in that palace bright
 The presence-chamber might be duly dight,
 For they were like to flowers of various bloom,
 And a divinest fragrance filled the room.

Then did I see how the great sorter chose
 One flower that seemed to me a hedgeling
 rose,
 And from the tangled press
 Of that irregular loveliness
 Set it apart—and—' This,' I heard him say,
 ' Is for the Master ' : so upon his way
 He would have passed, then I to him :—
 ' Whence is this rose ? O thou of cherubim
 The chiefest ? '—' Know'st thou not ? ' he said
 and smiled,
 ' This is the first prayer of a little child.'

CCXV

MAY MARGERY OF LYNTON

May Margery of Lynton
 Is brighter than the day ;
 Her eye is like the sun in heaven—
 Was ne'er so sweet a May !

May Margery has learnt a tune
 To which her soul is set—
 The voices of all happy things
 Are in its cadence met—
 The voices of all happy things
 In air, and earth, and sea,

Make music in the little breast
Of sweet May, Margery.

And has May Margery a heart ?
Nay, child, God give thee grace !
He made it for thee years ago,
And keeps it in a place—
The heart of gold that shall be thine,—
But who shall have the key
That opens it—Ah, who ? ah, who ?
Ah who, May Margery ?

CCXVI

THE INTERCEPTED SALUTE

A little maiden met me in the lane,
And smiled a smile so very fain, .
So full of trust and happiness,
I could not choose but bless
The child, that she should have such grace
To laugh into my face.

She never could have known me but I thought
It was the common joy that wrought
Within the little creature's heart,
As who should say .—'Thou art
As I ; the heaven is bright above us ;
And there is God to love us
And I am but a little gleeful maid,
And thou art big, and old, and staid ;
But the blue hills have made thee mild
As is a little child.
Wherefore I laugh that thou may'st see—
O, laugh ! O, laugh with me ! '

A pretty challenge ! Then I turned me round,
And straight the sober truth I found.
For I was not alone , behind me stood,
Beneath his load of wood,
He that of right the smile possessed—
Her father manifest.

O, blest be God ! that such an overplus
Of joy is given to us !
That that sweet innocent
Gave me the gift she never meant,
A gift secure and permanent !
For, howsoe'er the smile had birth,
It is an added glory on the earth.

CCXVII

IN A FAIR GARDEN

In a fair garden
I saw a mother playing with her child,
And, with that chance beguiled,
I could not choose but look
How she did seem to harden
His little soul to brook
Her absence—reconciled
With after boon of kisses,
And sweet irrational blisses.
For she would hide
With loveliest grace
Of seeming craft
Till he was ware of none beside
Himself upon the place,—
And then he laughed,
And then he stood a space
Disturbed, his face
Prepared for tears ;
And half-acknowledged fears
Met would-be courage, balancing
His heart upon the spring
Of flight—till, waxing stout,
He gulped the doubt.
So up the pleached alley
Full swift he ran :
Whence she,
Not long delayed,
Rushed forth with joyous sally

Upon her little man.
Then was it good to see
How each to other³ made
A pretty rapture of discovery

Blest child ! blest mother ! blest the truth ye
taught—
God seeketh us, and yet He would be sought.

CCXVIII

O GOD, TO THEE I YIELD

O God, to Thee I yield
The gift Thou giv'st most precious, most divine !
Yet to what field
I must resign
His little feet
That wont to be so fleet,
I muse. O, joy to think
On what soft brink
Of flood he plucks the daffodils,
On what empurpled hills
He stands, Thy kiss all fresh upon his brow,
And wonders, if his father sees him now !

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI

CCXIX

CONTENTMENT

Dancing on the hill-tops,
Singing in the valleys,
• Laughing with the echoes,
• Merry little Alice.

Playing games with lambkins
In the flowering valleys,
Gathering pretty posies,
Helpful little Alice.

It her father's cottage
 Turned into a palace,
 And he owned the hill-tops
 And the flowering valleys,
 She'd be none the happier,
 Happy little Alice.

CCXX

A CRADLE SONG

Sleep, little Baby, sleep,
 The holy Angels love thee,
 And guard thy bed, and keep
 A blessed watch above thee.
 No spirit can come near
 Nor evil beast to harm thee :
 Sleep, Sweet, devoid of fear
 Where nothing need alarm thee.

The Love which doth not sleep,
 The eternal Arms surround thee :
 The Shepherd of the sheep
 In perfect love hath found thee.
 Sleep through the holy night,
 Christ-kept from snare and sorrow,
 Until thou wake to light
 And love and warmth to-morrow.

CCXXI

BUDS AND BABIES

A million buds are born that never blow,
 That sweet with promise lift a pretty head
 To blush and wither on a barren bed,
 And leave no fruit to show.

Sweet, unfulfilled. Yet have I understood
 One joy, by their fragility made plain :
 Nothing was ever beautiful in vain,
 Or all in vain was good.

, CCXXII

HOLY INNOCENTS DAY

They scarcely waked before they slept,
 They scarcely wept before they laughed ;
 They drank indeed, death's bitter draught,
 But all its bitterest dregs were kept
 And drained by Mothers while they wept
 From Heaven the speechless Infants speak
 Weep not (they say), our Mothers dear,
 For swords nor sorrows come not here
 Now we are strong who were so weak,
 And all is ours we could not seek.
 We bloom among the blooming flowers,
 We sing among the singing birds ;
 Wisdom we have who wanted words .
 Here morning knows not evening hours,
 All's rainbow here without the showers.
 And softer than our Mother's breast,
 And closer than our Mother's arm,
 Is here the Love that keeps us warm
 And broods above our happy nest
 Dear Mothers, come : for Heaven is best.

' LEWIS CARROLL '

CCXXIII

POEM TO 'ALICE IN WONDERLAND'

All in the golden afternoon
 Full leisurely we glide ,
 For both our oars, with little skill,
 By little arms are plied,
 While little hands make vain pretence
 Our wanderings to guide
 Ah, cruel Three ! In such an hour,
 Beneath such dreamy weather,

To beg a tale of breath too weak
To stir the tiniest feather !
Yet what can one poor voice avail
Against three tongues together ?

Imperious Prima flashes forth
Her edict ' to begin it '—
In gentler tone Secunda hopes
' There will be nonsense in it ! '—
While Tertia interrupts the tale
Not *more* than once a minute.

Anon, to sudden silence won,
In fancy they pursue
The dream-child moving through a land
Of wonders wild and new,
In friendly chat with bird or beast—
And half believe it true.

And ever, as the story drained
The wells of fancy dry,
And faintly strove that weary one
To put the subject by,
' The rest next time '—' It is next time ! '
The happy voices cry

Thus grew the tale of Wonderland :
Thus slowly, one by one,
Its quaint events were hammered out—
And now the tale is done,
And home we steer, a merry crew,
Beneath the setting sun.

Alice ! a childish story take,
And with a gentle hand
Lay it where Childhood's dreams are twined
In Memory's mystic band,
Like pilgrim's wither'd wreath of flowers
Pluck'd in a far-off land

CCXXIV

*From PROEM TO 'ALICE THROUGH
THE LOOKING GLASS'*

Child of the pure unclouded brow
 And dreaming eyes of wonder !
 Though time be fleet, and I and thou
 Are half a life asunder,
 Thy loving smile will surely hail
 The love-gift of a fairy-tale.

I have not seen thy sunny face,
 Nor heard thy silver laughter ,
 No thought of me shall find a place .
 In thy young life's hereafter—
 Enough that now thou wilt not fail
 To listen to my fairy-tale.

FRANCIS ROBERT ST. CLAIR-ERSKINE,
 EARL OF ROSSLYN

CCXXV

BED-TIME

'Tis bed-time , say your hymn, and bid ' Good-
 night,
 God bless Mamma, Papa, and dear ones all,'
 Your half-shut eyes beneath your eyelids fall,
 Another minute you will shut them quite.
 Yes, I will carry you, put out the light,
 And tuck you up, although you are so tall !
 What will you give me, Sleepy One, and call
 My wages, if I settle you all right ?
 I laid her golden curls upon my arm,
 I drew her little feet within my hand,
 Her rosy palms were joined in trustful bliss,
 Her heart next mine beat gently, soft and warm ;
 She nestled to me, and, by Love's command,
 Paid me my precious wages—' Baby's kiss.'

THE HON. RODEN NOEL

CCXXVI

VALE !

O tender dove, sweet circling in the blue,
Whom now a delicate cloud receives from view,
O cool, soft, delicate cloud, we name dim Death !
O pure white lamb-lily, inhaling breath
From spiritual ether among bowers
Of evergreen in the ever-living flowers
Yonder aloft upon the airy height,
Mine eyes may scarce arrive at thy still light !
Wandering ever higher, O, farewell !
Wilt thou the dear God tell
We loved thee well,
While He would lend thee ? Why may we not
follow ?
Do thou remember us in our dim hollow !
Farewell, love ! O, farewell, farewell, farewell !
We wave to thee, as when of old
Thou waved, and we waved, heart of gold !
Parting for a little while
And is all parting only for a while ?
O faint perfume from realms beyond the sky !
Waft of a low celestial melody !
O pure live water from our earthly well,
Whom Love changed to a heavenly oenomei,
The while he kiss'd the bowl with longing lip,
And drew the soul therein to fellowship !
Shimmer of white wings, ere ye vanish !
Glimmer of white robes, ere ye banish,
With your full glory, mortal eyes
From Paradise !
So far, so far,
Little star !
Unless thine own dear happiness it mar,
Remember us in our low dell,
Who love thee well !
Farewell !

WILLIAM MORRIS

CCXXVII

THE VISION

SIR, ye are old, and ye have seen perchance
 Some little child for very gladness dance
 Over a scarcely-noticed worthless thing,
 Worth more to him than ransom of a king,
 Did not a pang of more than pity take
 Your heart thereat, not for the youngling's
 sake,
 But for your own, for man that passes by,
 So like to God, so like the beasts that die ?—
 Lo, Sirs, my pity for myself is such,
 When like an image that my hand can touch
 My old self grows unto myself grown old

SARAH MORGAN BRYAN PIATT

CCXXVIII

LAST WORDS

(Over a little bed at night)

Good night, pretty sleepers of mine—
 I never shall see you again
 Ah, never in shadow or shine ;
 Ah, never in dew or in rain.
 In your small dreaming-dresses of white,
 With the wild-bloom you gathered to-day
 In your quiet shut hands, from the light
 And the dark you will wander away.
 Though no graves in the bee-haunted grass,
 And no love in the beautiful sky,
 Shall take you as yet, you will pass,
 With this kiss, through these tear-drops.
 Good-bye !

With less gold and more gloom in their hair,
When the buds near have faded to flowers,
Three faces may wake here as fair—
But older than yours are, by hours !

Good night, then, lost darlings of mine—
I never shall see you again .
Ah, never in shadow or shine,
Ah, never in dew or in rain.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

CCXXIX

IN A GARDEN

Baby, see the flowers !
—Baby sees
Fairer things than these,
Fairer though they be than dreams of ours.
Baby, hear the birds !
—Baby knows
Better songs than those,
Sweeter though they sound than sweetest words.
Baby, see the moon !
—Baby's eyes
Laugh to watch it rise,
Answering light with love and night with
noon.
Baby, hear the sea !
—Baby's face
Takes a graver grace,
Touched with wonder what the sound may
be.
Baby, see the star !
—Baby's hand
Opens, warm and bland,
Calm in claim of all things fair that are.

Baby, hear the bells !
 —Baby's head
 Bows, as ripe for bed,
 Now the flowers curl round and close their cells.
 Baby, flower of light,
 Sleep, and see
 Brighter dreams than we,
 Till good day shall smile away good night.

CCXXX

From 'A BABY'S DEATH'

The little hands that never sought
 Earth's prizes, worthless all as sands,
 What gift has death, God's servant, brought
 The little hands ?

We ask : but love's self silent stands,
 Love, that lends eyes and wings to thought
 To search where death's dim heaven expands.
 Ere this, perchance, though love know nought,
 Flowers fill them, grown in lovelier lands,
 Where hands of guiding angels caught
 The little hands.

CCXXXI

FIRST FOOTSTEPS

A little way, more soft and sweet
 Than fields aflower with May,
 A babe's feet, venturing, scarce complete
 A little way.

Eyes full of dawning day
 Look up for mother's eyes to meet,
 Too blithe for song to say
 Glad as the golden spring to greet
 Its first live leaflet's play,
 Love, laughing, leads the little feet
 A little way.

CCXXXII

WHAT IS DEATH ?

Looking on a page where stood
 Graven of old on old-world wood
 Death, and by the grave's edge grim,
 Pale, the young man facing him,
 Asked my well-beloved of me
 Once what strange thing this might be,
 Gaunt and great of limb

Death, I told him : and surprise
 Deepening more his wildwood eyes
 (Like some sweet fleet thing's whose breath
 Speaks all spring though nought it saith),
 Up he turned his rosebright face
 Glorious with its seven years' grace,
 Asking—What is Death ?

WILLIAM THRELKELD EDWARDS

CCXXXIII

UPWARD GAZING

Whither gazest, O my child ?
 What beholdest in the sky ?
 Dost thou feel thyself exiled
 From on high ?

Doth the Father give to thee
 Clearer vision than is mine ?
 Is it given thee to see
 Heaven shine ?

Dost thou see the face of Christ
 With thy new baptizèd eyes ?
 Angels bright emparadised
 In the skies ?

O my child, that thou couldst speak !
 Or thine eyes reflect the sight !

Thou must, since my faith is weak,
Teach me right.

Shall I teach thee more than thou
Canst reveal from God to me ?
For the sight of heaven seems now
Given thee

Sweet, it seems thy deep blue eyes
Take new azure from the sky ,
Truly near to heaven lies
Infancy

BRET HARTE

CCXXXIV

LITTLE NELL

Above the pines the moon was slowly drifting,
The river sang below ,
The dim Sierras, from beyond, uplifting
Their minarets of snow.

The roaring camp-fire, with rude humour, painted
The ruddy tints of health
On haggard face and form that drooped and
fainted

In the fierce race for wealth ,

Till one arose, and from his pack's scant treasure
A hoarded volume drew,
And cards were dropped from hands of listless
leisure

To hear the tale anew ,

And then, while round them shadows gathered
faster,

And as the fire-light fell,

He read aloud the book wherein the Master
Had writ of ' Little Nell.'

Perhaps 'twas boyish fancy—for the reader
Was youngest of them all—

But, as he read, from clustering pine and cedar
 A silence seemed to fall ,
 The fir-trees, gathering closer in the shadows,
 Listened in every spray,
 While the whole camp, with ' Nell ' on English
 meadows,
 Wandered and lost their way.
 And so in mountain solitudes—o'ertaken
 As by some spell divine—
 Their cares dropped from them like the needles
 shaken
 From out the gusty pine
 Lost is that camp, and wasted all its fire ,
 And he who wrought that spell ?—
 Ah, towering pine and stately Kentish spire,
 Ye have one tale to tell !
 Lost is that camp ! but let its fragrant story
 Blend with the breath that thrills
 With hop-vines' incense all the pensive glory
 That fills the Kentish hills
 And on that grave where English oak and holly
 And laurel wreaths entwine,
 Deem it not all a too presumptuous folly,—
 This spray of Western pine !

AUSTIN DOBSON

CCXXXV

BEFORE SEDAN

*The dead hand clasped a letter.' Special
 Correspondence.*

Here in this leafy place
 Quiet he lies,
 Cold, with his sightless face
 Turned to the skies.

'Tis but another dead ;
All you can say is said.

Carry his body hence—
Kings must have slaves ·
Kings climb to eminence
Over men's graves :
So this man's eye is dim ;—
Throw the earth over him

What was the white you touched,
There, at his side ?
Paper his hand had clutched
Tight ere he died ,—
Message or wish, maybe ;—
Smooth the folds out, and see.

Hardly the worst of us
Here could have smiled !—
Only the tremulous
Words of a child ,—
Prattle, that has for stops
Just a few ruddy drops.

Look She is sad to miss,
Morning and night,
His—her dead father's—kiss ;
Tries to be bright,
Good to Mamma, and sweet.
That is all. ' Marguerite.'

Ah, if beside the dead
Slumbered the pain !
Ah, if the hearts that bled
Slept with the slain !
If the grief died ,—But no ;—
Death will not have it so.

THOMAS HARDY

CCXXXVI

THE ROMAN ROAD

The Roman Road runs straight and bare
 As the pale parting-line in hair
 Across the heath And thoughtful men
 Contrast its days of Now and Then,
 And delve, and measure, and compare ,

Visioning on the vacant air
 Helmed legionaries, who proudly rear
 The Eagle, as they pace again
The Roman Road.

But no tall brass-helmed legionnaire
 Haunts it for me Uprises there
 A mother's form upon my ken,
 Guiding my infant steps, as when
 We walked that ancient thoroughfare
The Roman Road.

CCXXXVII

CHRISTMAS EVE

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.
 ' Now they are all on their knees,'
 An elder said as we sat in a flock
 By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where
 They dwelt in their strawy pen,
 Nor did it occur to one of us there
 To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave
 In these years ! Yet, I feel,
 If some one said on Christmas Eve,
 ' Come ; see the oxen kneel

' In the lonely barton by yonder coomb
 Our childhood used to know,'
 I should go with him in the gloom,
 Hoping it might be so.

HARRIET ELEANOR HAMILTON-KING

CCXXXVIII

WHERE ARE THE CHILDREN ?

Father and mother, many a year
 In rain and sunshine we have lived here,
 And the children—
 And now that the winter days are come,
 We wait and rest in our own old home ;
 But where are the children ?

All so young, in the times of old
 Not a lamb was missing from our fold,
 And the children—
 God's ways are narrow, the world is wide,
 I would have guarded them at my side ;
 But where are the children ?

We walk to the house of God alone,
 From the last year's nest the birds have flown,
 And the children—
 Alone by the silent hearth we sit,
 The chambers are ready, the fires are lit ;
 But where are the children ?

My life is failing, my hair is grey,
 I have seen the old years pass away,
 And the children—
 My steps are feeble, my voice is low,
 I am longing to bless you ere I go
 But where are the children ?

I had a dream of another home ,
 I thought when He called us I should come,
 And the children—

And say, at the feet of Our Father in Heaven,
 Here am I, with those Thou hast given :—
 But where are the children ?

The Day of the Lord is coming on ;
 We shall meet again before God's throne,
 And the children—
 Father and Mother, we trust, shall stand
 Together then at God's right hand .—
 But where are the children ?

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS

CCXXXIX

THE CHORISTER

Snow on the high-pitched minster roof and
 spire
 Snow on the boughs of leafless linden trees :
 Snow on the silent streets and squares that
 freeze
 Under night's wing, down-drooping nigh and
 nigher
 Inside the church, within the shadowy choir,
 Dim burn the lamps like lights on vaporous
 seas ;
 Drowsed are the voices of droned litanies ,
 Blurred as in dreams the face of priest and
 friar
 Cold hath numbed sense to slumber here ' But
 hark,
 One swift soprano, soaring like a lark,
 Startles the stillness , throbs that soul of fire,
 Beats around arch and aisle, floods echoing dark
 With exquisite aspiration ; higher, higher,
 Yearns in sharp anguish of untold desire !

CCXL

FOR ONE OF GIAN BELLINI'S LITTLE
ANGELS

My task it is to stand beneath the throne,
To stand and wait, while those grave pres-
ences,
Prophet and priest and saint and seraph, zone
Our Lady with the Child upon her knees .
They from mild lips receive the messages
Of peace and love, which thence to men below
They shower soft-falling like pure flakes of snow.
I meanwhile wait , and very mute must be
My music, lest I break the golden trance
Of bliss celestial, or with childish glee
Trouble the fount of divine utterance
Yet when those lips are tired of speech, per-
chance
It may be that the royal Babe will lie
And slumber to my whispered lullaby .
Then all those mighty brows will rest, and peace
Descend like dew on that high company
Therefore I stand and wait, but do not cease
To clasp my lute, that silver melody,
When our dear Lady bends her smile on me,
Forth from my throat and from these thrilling
strings
Dove-like may soar and spread ethereal wings.

ROBERT BUCHANAN

CCXLI

THE PILGRIM AND THE HERDBOY
Pilgrim

Little Herdboy, sitting there,
With the sunshine on thy hair,

And thy flocks so white and still
Spilt around thee on the hill,
Tell me true, in thy sweet speech,
Of the City I would reach

'Tis a City of God's Light
Most imperishably bright,
And its gates are golden all,—
And at dawn and evenfall
They grow ruby-bright and blest
To the east and to the west

Here, among the hills, it lies,
Like a lamb with lustrous eyes
Lying at the Shepherd's feet,
And the breath of it is sweet,
As it rises from the sward
To the nostrils of the Lord !

Little Herdboy, tell me right,
Hast thou seen it from thy height ?
For it lieth up this way,
And at dawn or death of day
Thou hast surely seen it shine
With the light that is divine.

The little Herdboy

Where the buttercups so sweet
Dust with gold my naked feet,
Where the grass grows green and long,
Sit I here and sing my song,
And the brown bird cries ' Cuckoo '
Under skies for ever blue !

Now and then, while I sing loud,
Flits a little fleecy cloud,
And uplooking I behold
How it turns to rain of gold,
Falling lightly, while around
Comes the stir of its soft sound !

Bright above and dim below
Is the many-colour'd Bow ;

'Tis the only light I mark,
Till the mountain-tops grow dark,
And uplooking I espy
Shining glow-worms in the sky ,

Then I hear the runlet's call,
And the voice o' the waterfall
Growing louder, and 'tis cold
As I guide my flocks to fold ,
But no City, great or small,
Have I ever seen at all !

JAMES RHOADES

CCXLII

TO TWO IN INDIA

(Of Janet, aged 5)

To-day I saw your little Jan,
You two in India far away,
A dainty sylph that laughed and ran
Upon the summer lawns at play
Dark-eyed with elfin locks of gold,
A medley quaint of grave and gay,
Of coy and forward, young and old—
I saw your little Jan to-day

She paused amidst her paradise,
A lofty scorn was in her ken,
Half scanning with reluctant eyes
The monster, me A sprite, a wren,
The shy beginnings of a girl,
A saucy nymph, a wayward fay,
A dewdrop prisoned in a pearl—
I saw your little Jan to-day

Anon to battledore she sped,
Or turned with flying puss to fly,
Or seized the terrier by the head,
Unconscious of her cruelty.

Her pout is an incarnate kiss,
 She smiles, a sunbeam strikes the may !
 Her whim is law you'll know by this
 I saw your little Jan to-day.

No news I send you 'tis the heart
 In exile hungers, not the brain
 What need to prate of Church and mart,
 Or Curzon and his coming reign ?
 Of statesman or of diplomat
 The more that's said, the more's to say,
 Kingdoms may wane, but what of that ?—
 I saw your little Jan to-day.

CCXLIII

From 'LOVELINESS IN MINIATURE'

Little maiden, fairy May
 Fairer than all song can say,
 Buoyant as the breeze of spring,
 Blithe as butterflies a-wing,
 Pure and fine the soul must be
 That can thus ethereally,
 And in earthly mould, express
 All its own unearthliness

Like the sudden smiles that flit
 (Spring comes back to think of it)
 O'er the face of April, seen
 But to vanish and have been,
 So the swift vicissitude
 Of each gay and pensive mood,
 Sweet at rest thou art, and sweet
 Roving, sweetest when the feet,
 That will neither walk nor stay,
 Dance adown the common way.

CCXLIV

A CHILDREN'S SONG

Every day from morn to night
 Love and laughter and heart's delight,
 Every night from eve till morn
 Dewy dreams by the Angels borne :
 Only believe, and it all comes true,
 This is our message to you and you
 This is the charm we children weaye
 Down in the meadows of make-believe.

*List to the lilt of the children's song !
 Never a thought or fear of wrong '
 Little tongues utter it,
 Little hearts flutter it,
 Flutter and utter it all day long*

Nothing is real that brings annoy,
 Earth brims over with unseen joy :
 Lonely wanderer, shut your eyes,
 Golden palaces gleam and rise,
 Golden lovers appear, to woo ;
 Only believe, and it all comes true ;
 This is the spell the Wee Folk weave
 Round the believers in make-believe

Can you not see them, can you not hear,
 Thronging the marge of our magic mere,
 Couched on a bull-rush-tip for bed,
 Hanging in air on a spider's thread,
 Or, if the windy ways they'd track,
 Mounted aloft on dragon-fly-back ?
 These are the joys our eyes receive
 Here in the meadows of make-believe.

Ah ! but why do you doubt, or why
 Sadden, and so grow old and die ?
 ' We have forgotten to laugh,' you say,
 ' Can we again grow young and gay—

Though spectral faiths contend, and for her course
 The soul confused must try,
 While through the whirl of atoms and of force
 Looms an abandoned sky ,
 Yet know I, Peace abides, of earth's wild things
 Centre, and ruling thence ,
 Behold, a spirit folds her budded wings
 In confident innocence

FREDERIC W H. MYERS

CCXLVI

AS LITTLE CHILDREN

Who with prayers has overtaken
 Those glad hours when he would waken
 To the sound of branches shaken
 By an early song and wild,—
 When the golden leaves would flicker,
 And the loving thoughts come thicker,
 And the thrill of life beat quicker
 In the sweet heart of the child ?

CCXLVII

INNOCENCE

Thro' what new world, this happy hour,
 What wild romance, what faery bower,
 Ere Nelly's fancies flown ?
 The dreamy eyes, the eager mind,
 Of all imagined homes shall find
 None sweeter than her own

The best is truest ; that was best
 When Nelly, heart and soul at rest
 Knelt at the vesper-prayer ,
 No poet's dream, methought, could shed
 O'er that unconscious childly head
 So high a light and fair.

For innocence is Eden still ;
 Round the pure heart, the loving will,
 Heaven's hosts encamped abide ;
 A Presence that I may not name
 Thro' souls unknowing guilt or shame
 Walks in the eventide.

CCXLVIII

TO ALICE'S PICTURE

Unconscious child, fair pictured Phantasy !
 More than thy song I from those lips have heard,
 More than thy thought have guessed in look and
 word,
 More than thyself mine eyes adore in thee !
 Thou art the promise of Earth's joy to be,—
 Days to our days by Fate how far preferred !
 By stranger loveliness more softly stirred,
 By purer passions taught tranquillity
 Nay, hoped I not thro' Death's swift-soaring ways
 Mine own poor self some glory unknown to
 know,—
 If, slowly darkening from delightful days,
 I to mere night must gird myself and go,—
 Then on thy face I should not dare to gaze
 For wild rebellion and for yearning woe.

EDWARD CARPENTER

CCXLIX

THE BABE

The trio perfect : the man, the woman, and the
 babe .
 And herein all Creation.
 The two, with wonder in their eyes, from oppo-
 site worlds
 Of sex, of ancestry, pursuits, traditions,

Each other suddenly, amazed, confronting—
A nameless glory each in each surmising.

A frenzy as of Gods—

Imperial rage, flinging the goods of the world
aside as dross, to reach to a priceless
treasure.

[He madly invasive,

She deeply wise, and drawing farther back

Even to the gates of Paradise as he approaches.]

Strange ecstasy of warfare!

Seisin and ravishment of souls and bodies,

Veils rent asunder,

Heaven opening measureless, overhead, in
splendour,

And all life changed, transfigured!

And then a calm.

Weeks of humdrum and mortal commonplace,

And months perchance in monotone of toil,

But still behind it all some deep remembrance,

Some sure reliance,

And sweet and secret knowledge in each other.

And then the Babe.

A tiny perfect sea-shell on the shore

By the waves gently laid (the awful waves!)—

By trembling hands received—a folded message—

A babe yet slumbering, with a ripple on its face

Remindful of the ocean

And two twined forms that overbend it, smiling,

And wonder to what land Love must have
journeyed,

Who brought this back—this word of sweetest
meaning:

Two lives made one, and visible as one.

And herein all Creation.

CCL

ALICE

With little red frock in the fire-light, in the
lingering April evening—

(The moonlight over the tree-tops just beginning
to shine in at the cottage door)—

Her big brown eyes and comical big mouth for
very gladness unresting, like a small brown
fairy—

She stands, the five-year-old child

Then, so gentle, with tiny tripping speech, and
with a little wave of the hand—

' Good-night,' she says to the fire and to the
moon,

And kissing the elder wearier faces,
Runs off to bed and to sleep in the lap of heaven

ROBERT BRIDGES

CCLI

BE LIKE ONE OF THESE

When I see childhood on the threshold seize
The prize of life from age and likelihood,
I mourn time's change that will not be with-
stood,

Thinking how Christ said *Be like one of these*.

For in the forest among many trees
Scarce one in all is found that hath made good
The virgin pattern of its slender wood,
That courtesied in joy to every breeze ,

But scath'd, but knotted trunks that raise on
high
Their arms in stiff contortion, strain'd and bare ;
Whose patriarchal crowns in sorrow sigh.

So, little children, ye—nay, nay, ye ne'er
 From me shall learn how sure the change and
 nigh,
 When ye shall share our strength and mourn to
 share.

CCLII

POOR CHILD

On a mournful day
 When my heart was lonely,
 O'er and o'er my thought
 Conned but one thing only
 Thinking how I lost
 Wand'ring in the wild-wood
 The companion self
 Of my careless childhood.
 How, poor child, it was
 I shall ne'er discover,
 But 'twas just when he
 Grew to be thy lover,
 With thine eyes of trust
 And thy mirth, whereunder
 All the world's hope lay
 In thy heart of wonder.
 Now, beyond regrets
 And faint memories of thee,
 Saddest is, poor child,
 That I cannot love thee.

CCLIII

MILLICENT

Thou dimpled Millicent, of merry guesses,
 Strong-limb'd and tall, tossing thy wayward
 tresses,
 What mystery of the heart can so surprise
 The mirth and music of thy brimming eyes?

Pale-brow, thou knowest not and diest to learn
The mortal secret that doth in thee burn ;
With look imploring ' If you love me, tell,
What is it in me that you love so well ? '

And suddenly thou stakest all thy charms,
And leapest on me ; and in thy circling arms
When almost stifled with their wild embrace,
I feel thy hot tears sheltering on my face.

SARAH CHAUNCEY WOOLSEY
(SUSAN COOLIDGE)

CCLIV

*THE CRADLE-TOMB
IN KING HENRY VII'S CHAPEL*

A little rudely-sculptured bed,
With shadowing folds of marble lace,
And quilt of marble primly spread,
And folded round a baby's face ,
Smoothly the mimic coverlet,
With royal blazonries bedight,
Hangs as by tender fingers set
And straightened for a last good-night.
And traced upon the pillowing stone
A dent is seen, as if, to bless
That quiet sleep, some grieving one
Had leaned and left a soft impress.
It seems no more than yesterday
Since that sad mother, down the stair
And down the long aisle, stole away
And left her darling sleeping there.
But dust upon the cradle lies—
And those who prized the baby so,
And decked her couch with heavy sighs,
Are turned to dust long years ago.

Above the peaceful pillowed head
 Three centuries brood, and strangers peep
 And wonder at the carven bed—
 But not unwept the baby's sleep.

For wistful mother-eyes are blurred
 With sudden mists, as lingerers stray,
 And the old dusts are roused and stirred
 By the warm tear-drops of to-day.

Soft, furtive hands caress the stone,
 And hearts, o'erleaping place and age,
 Melt into memories and own
 A thrill of common parentage.

Men die, but sorrow never dies—
 The crowding years divide in vain,
 And the wide world is knit with ties
 Of common brotherhood in pain—

Of common share in grief and loss,
 And heritage in the immortal bloom
 Of love, which, flowering round the Cross,
 Made beautiful a baby's tomb.

WILLIAM CANTON

CCLV

LAUS INFANTIUM

In praise of little children I will say
 God first made man, then found a better way
 For woman, but His third way was the best :
 Of all created things the loveliest
 And most divine are children. Nothing here
 Can be to us more precious or more dear.
 And though, when God saw all His works were
 good,
 There was no rosy flower of babyhood,
 'Twas said of children in a later day
 That none could enter Heaven save such as they.

The earth, which feels the flowering of a thorn,
Was glad, O little child, when you were born,
The earth, which thrills when skylarks scale the
blue,
Soared up itself to God's own Heaven in you
And Heaven, which loves to lean down and to glass
Its beauty in each dewdrop on the grass—
Heaven laughed to find your face so pure and fair,
And left, O little child, its reflex there.

CCLVI

BUBBLE-BLOWING

Our plot is small, but sunny limes
Shut out all cares and troubles,
And there my little girl at times
And I sit blowing bubbles

The screaming swifts race to and fro,
Bees cross the ivied paling,
Draughts lift and set the globes we blow
In freakish currents sailing

They glide, they dart, they soar, they break,
Oh, joyous little daughter !
What lovely coloured worlds we make,
What crystal flowers of water !

One, green and rosy, slowly drops ,
One soars and shines a minute,
And carries to the lime-tree tops
Our home, reflected in it.

The gable, with cream rose in bloom,
She sees from roof to basement ;
' Oh, father, there's your little room ! '
She cries in glad amazement

To her, enchanted with the gleam,
The glamour and the glory,
The bubble home's a home of dream,
And I must tell its story .

Tell what we did, and how we played,
 And lived, divinely double—
 A father and his merry maid
 Whose world was in a bubble !

CCLVII

A PHILOSOPHER

Yes, you may let them creep about the rug,
 And stir the fire ! Aha ! that's bright and snug,
 To think these mites—ay, nurse, unfold the
 screen !—

Should be as ancient as the Miocene ;
 That ages back beneath a palm-tree's shade
 These rosy little quadrupeds have played,
 Have cried for moons or mammoths, and have
 blacked

Their faces round the Drift Man's fire—in
 fact,
 That ever since the articulate race began
 These babes have been the joy and plague of
 man !

Unnoticed by historian and sage,
 These bright-eyed chits have been from age
 to age

The one supreme majority I find
 Mankind have been their slaves, and woman-
 kind

Their worshippers , and both have lived in
 dread

Of time and tyrants , toiled and wept and
 bled,

Because of some quaint elves they called their
 own.

Had little ones in Egypt been unknown,
 No Pharaoh would have had the power,
 methinks,

To pile the Pyramids or carve the Sphinx.

Take them to bed, nurse ; but, before she goes,
 Papa must toast his little woman's toes.
 Strange that such feeble hands and feet as
 these
 Have sped the lamp-race of the centuries !

CCLVIII

THE LITTLE SHOES

These little shoes !—How proud she was of these !
 Can you forget how, sitting on your knees,
 She used to prattle volubly, and raise
 Her tiny feet to win your wondering praise ?
 Was life too rough for feet so softly shod,
 That now she walks in Paradise with God,
 Leaving but these—whereon to dote and muse—
 These little shoes ?

1870

CCLIX

THE GOD AND THE SCHOOLBOY

.
 Upon a time, among the folk who sought
 Surcease of suffering from Asklepios,
 Was brought a schoolboy from the white-walled
 town
 Upon the rocky point—Euphanes, frail,
 And fever-flushed, and weak with grievous pain ;
 And as the lad, beneath the clement stars,
 Lay wandering in his mind, and dreamed per-
 chance
 Of sailing little triremes on the shore,
 Or making, it might be, a locust cage
 With reeds and stalks of asphodel beneath
 The trellised vines, it seemed as though the god
 Stood by him in the holy night and spoke .—
 ‘ What wilt thou give me, little playfellow,
 If I shall cure thy sickness ? ’ And the lad,
 Thinking what pleasure schoolboys have in these,

Replied . ' I'll give thee my ten marbles, god ! '
 Asklepios laughed, right gladdened with the gift,
 And said ' Then, truly, I will make thee well ! '
 And lo ! when morning whitened on the hills,
 And in the valley's dusk the sacæd cock
 Clapped wings and sang, the urchin went forth
 whole !

Full four-and-twenty centuries ago
 Euphanes saw the god , and yesterday
 The pillar bearing record of the cure
 Was dug from wreck of war and drift of years
*' Ten marbles ! quoth the child Asklepios
 laughed ,*
But on the morrow forth the lad went whole '
 Thus closely had the Greek in ancient times—
 Through some prophetic prompting of pure love
 God's unfulfilled events divining—drawn
 Man's heart unto the human heart in God

JOHN BANNISTER TABB

CCLX

BEDTIME · THE FIRST CHRISTMAS

(At the Manger)

When first her Christmas watch to keep
 Came down the silent angel, Sleep,
 With snowy sandals shod,
 Beholding what His mother's hands
 Had wrought, with softer swaddling-bands
 She swathed the Son of God.

Then skilled in mysteries of night,
 With tender visions of delight
 She wreathed His resting place,
 Till, wakened by a warmer glow
 Than heaven itself had yet to show,
 He saw His mother's face

CCLXI

SURVIVAL

The tempest past—
 A home in ruin laid ,
But lo ! where last
 The little children played
At hide-and-seek,
A footprint small
Pleads silently,
As if afraid to speak.
' Behold in me
A memory,
The least and last of all ! '

GEORGE BARLOW

CCLXII

THE DEAD CHILD

But yesterday she played with childish things,
 With toys and painted fruit
To-day she may be speeding on bright wings
 Beyond the stars ! We ask The stars are
 mute.

But yesterday her doll was all in all ;
 She laughed and was content
To-day she will not answer, if we call .
 She dropp'd no toys to show the road she went.

But yesterday she smiled and ranged with art
 Her playthings on the bed
To-day and yesterday are leagues apart .
 She will not smile to-day, for she is dead.

EDMUND GOSSE

CCLXIII

TO TERESA

Deaf child of mine, the wealth of whose warm
 hair
 Hangs like ripe clusters of the apricot,
 Thy blue eyes, gazing, comprehend me not,
 But love me, and for love alone I care ;
 Thou listenest with a shy and serious air,
 Like some Sabrina from her weedy grot
 Outpeeping coyly when the noon is hot
 To watch some shepherd piping unaware
 'Twas not for thee I sang, dear child,—and yet
 Would that my song could reach such ears as
 thine,
 Pierce to young hearts unsullied by the fret
 Of years in their white innocence divine ;
 Crowned with a wreath of buds still dewy-wet,
 O what a fragrant coronal were mine !

EDMOND GORE ALEXANDER HOLMES

CCLXIV

ON THE DEATH OF HIS FIRST-BORN SON

My first-born boy, whose beautiful dead face
 Watching, I marvelled what mysterious charm
 Had changed that look of anguish and alarm
 To radiant peace and more than mortal grace,—
 So passing fair that, for a moment's space,
 Methought an angel held thee safe from harm,
 Thy head soft-pillowed on her fondling arm,
 Ere she upbore thee to the better place.—
 'Twas but a little wound that pierced my
 heart,
 Dealt by the dagger of that last long kiss :

Thy brother came and played his baby part
With such sweet skill, that in my new-found
bliss

I learned my loss, and now Time's magic art,
Which heals a'l other wounds, but deepens this.

CCLXV

CHILDHOOD'S HOME

I passed through the open gateway and under
the bending trees
The boughs of the stooping beeches stirred in the
summer breeze
The branching shadows fluttered as asleep on
the lawn they lay
And up through the sunny meadow the avenue
wound its way

I passed through the open gateway and I was a
child again.
The grass and the leaves were sparkling in jewels
of last night's rain.
But lo! a turn in the pathway clouded my eyes
with tears;
And I stood and gazed in rapture on the home
of my early years

The same—and yet I marvelled, for surely of
old it stood
Fronting a boundless meadow,—on the skirts of
a sombre wood,—
With a stately hill behind it, from whose height
I used to gaze
To where the horizon bounded the world of my
childish days.

But the hill was a little hillock—the wood was
a little grove
'Twas only a little paddock through which I
loved to rove:

ON INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD 251

I climbed, but the wizard fancy had somewhere
lost his wand :

I looked to the far horizon, but the whole world
lay beyond

Yet the grass had its wonted verdure—the sun
had its wonted gold—

The raindrops trembled and sparkled, as ever in
days of old :

And clouds were ne'er more fleecy, and never a
fresher breeze

Passed with a crisper murmur through depths of
the greenwood trees

And I wondered if one of the dear ones, who left
us and went his way

Into the kingdom of twilight misty and cold and
grey,

Could rise from the depths of silence and come
for a little while,

And hear the breezes rustle and see the green
earth smile,—

Would the earth he had left behind him—the
earth he had loved so well—

That once was higher than heaven, and deeper
than depths of hell—

Seem now but a mote in the sunbeam, a drop in
the water race,

Its life the pulse of a moment—a foothold its
orb of space ?

Would he learn that its ancient limits, now
grown so narrow and near,

Had veiled from imagination the skirts of a
boundless sphere ?

Would he look to the utmost verges that ever
his feet had trod,

And still find far beyond them the world of the
Heaven of God ?

Yet perchance as he gazed around him a tear of
regret might rise,
And blot for a passing moment all else but earth
from his eyes
He would murmur ' Oh God, I know Thee in the
least of Thy works complete '
It is all as of old I left it—, and then it was oh !
how sweet.'

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

CCLXVI

THE LAMPLIGHTER

My tea is nearly ready and the sun has left the
sky ,
It's time to take the window to see Leerie going
by ,
For every night at teatime and before you take
your seat,
With lantern and with ladder he comes posting
up the street.

Now Tom would be a driver and Maria go to
sea,
And my papa's a banker and as rich as he can be ;
But I, when I am stronger and can choose what
I'm to do,
O Leerie, I'll go round at night and light the
lamps with you !

For we are very lucky, with a lamp before the
door,
And Leerie stops to light it as he lights so many
more ,
And O ! before you hurry by with ladder and
with light,
O Leerie, see a little child and nod to him to-
night !

CCLXVII

THE UNSEEN PLAYMATE

When children are playing alone on the green,
 In comes the playmate that never was seen.
 When children are happy and lonely and good,
 The Friend of the Children comes out of the wood

Nobody heard him and nobody saw,
 He is a picture you never could draw,
 But he's sure to be present, abroad or at home,
 When children are happy and playing alone.

He lies in the laurels, he runs on the grass,
 He sings when you tinkle the musical glass ;
 Whene'er you are happy and cannot tell why,
 The Friend of the Children is sure to be by !

He loves to be little, he hates to be big,
 'Tis he that inhabits the caves that you dig ,
 'Tis he when you play with your soldiers of tin
 That sides with the Frenchmen and never can win.

'Tis he, when at night you go off to your bed,
 Bids you go to your sleep and not trouble your
 head ,
 For wherever they're lying, in cupboard or shelf,
 'Tis he will take care of your playthings himself !

CCLXVIII

SHADOW MARCH

All round the house is the jet-black night ;
 It stares through the window-pane ,
 It crawls in the corners, hiding from the light,
 And it moves with the moving flame

Now my little heart goes a-beating like a drum,
 With the breath of the Bogie in my hair ,
 And all round the candle the crooked shadows
 come
 And go marching along up the stair,

The shadow of the balusters, the shadow of the
lamp,

The shadow of the child that goes to bed—
All the wicked shadows coming tramp, tramp,
tramp,
With the black night overhead

CCLXIX

ENVOY TO MINNIE

The red room with the giant bed
Where none but elders laid their head ;
The little room where you and I
Did for awhile together lie
And, simple suitor,—I your hand
In decent marriage did demand ;
The great day nursery, best of all,
With pictures pasted on the wall
And leaves upon the blind—
A pleasant room wherein to wake
And hear the leafy garden shake
And rustle in the wind—
And pleasant there to lie in bed
And see the pictures overhead—
The wars about Sebastopol,
The grinning guns along the wall,
The daring escalade,
The plunging ships, the bleating sheep,
The happy children ankle-deep
And laughing as they wade :
All these are vanished clean away,
And the old manse is changed to-day ;
It wears an altered face
And shields a stranger race.
The river, on from mill to mill,
Flows past our childhood's garden still ;
But ah ! we children never more
Shall watch it from the water-door !
Below the yew—it still is there—

Our phantom voices haunt the air
 As we were still at play,
 And I can hear their call and say :
 ' *How far is it to Babylon ?* '

Ah, far enough, my dear,
 Far, far enough from here—
 Yet you have farther gone !
 ' *Can I get there by candlelight ?* '
 So goes the old refrain.
 I do not know—perchance you might—
 But only children hear it right,
 Ah, never to return again !
 The eternal dawn, beyond a doubt,
 Shall break on hill and plain,
 And put all stars and candles out
 Ere we be young again.

To you in distant India, these
 I send across the seas,
 Nor count it far across
 For which of us forgets
 The Indian cabinets,
 The bones of antelope, the wings of albatross,
 The pied and painted birds and beans,
 The junks and bangles, beads and screens,
 The gods and sacred bells,
 And the loud-humming, twisted shells ?
 The level of the parlour floor
 Was honest, homely, Scottish shore ;
 But when we climbed upon a chair,
 Behold, the gorgeous East was there !

Be this a fable ; and behold
 Me in the parlour as of old,
 And Minnie just above me set
 In the quaint Indian cabinet !
 Smiling and kind, you grace a shelf
 Too high for me to reach myself.
 Reach down a hand, my dear, and take
 These rhymes for old acquaintance' sake !

CCLXX

ENVOY TO ANY READER

As from the house your mother sees
You playing round the garden trees,
So you may see, 'f you will look
Through the windows of this book,
Another child, far, far away,
And in another garden, play
But do not think you can at all,
By knocking on the window, call
That child to hear you He intent
Is all on his play-business bent
He does not hear, he will not look,
Nor yet be lured out of this book.
For, long ago, the truth to say,
He has grown up and gone away,
And it is but a child of air
That lingers in the garden there.

ANNIE MATHESON

CCLXXI

TO A LITTLE CHILD

Clear eyes of heaven's chosen hue
When not a cloud is seen above
To fleck the warm untroubled blue,
A little laughing face of love,
A boundless energy of life
In dimpled arms and rosy feet;
No breath of care, no touch of strife,
Has dulled thy glad heart's rhythmic beat.
So girt about with golden light,
By shadows still so little vexed,
That many a weary anxious wight
Grows in thy presence less perplexed,

Our smiles come at thy fairy beck,
 Frowns pass away at thy caress ,
 When thy soft arms are round my neck
 I feel God's wondrous tenderness

WILLIAM JAMES DAWSON

CCLXXII

THE SLEEPING MOTHER

How still the vast depths of this City's heart !
 At last the ever-moaning tide of life
 Is quiet, and, sweet mother, wearied thou
 With the babe's wailing and its piteous strife,
 Thou too, worn in love's toil, art tranquil now
 I watch thee, and I think how fair thou art
 In this deep-lidded sleep , the uncoiled hair
 Piled round the high clear brow, one white arm
 bare
 On which lies warm the little golden head
 Wearier even than thine And now I see
 How sunk thine eyes are, and that forehead fair,
 How fretted with faint lines unmerited
 So early , and reproach lays hold of me,
 That I have led thee from thy pastures green
 To these steep slopes where we are bowed with
 care
 Yet if thou should'st awake and read my thought,
 I know thine eyes would fill with light serene,
 And thou would'st say, ' This burden have I
 sought,
 This service is a perfect liberty ,
 This City of Love, whose pulse of love beats
 quick
 With strenuous tasks, is it not better far
 Than virgii pastures, where the air is thick
 With golden languors and a dull content ? '
 Great joy hath woman when that time is spent,
 And on her life there rises that new star
 Which leads her feet where mother-raptures are.

MARGARET L. WOODS

CCLXXIII

THE CHILD ALONE

'Tis a pleasant thing to be free
Nobody knows, nobody guesses
What I am doing, where I am staying
'Where is Marjorie?' mother is saying
Julie, who loves to sit making her dresses,
Says, 'She is playing
Under the tree.'

No—through the jungle Marjorie passes
Sometimes I run, sometimes I stand
Still in a covert of high waving grasses,
Over my head.
Wilderness ways, uninhabited land,
Lone I explore

Hares in the grass, mice where I tread,
Look up and wonder,
Or the squirrel flashes
Red as he dashes
Over the leafy forest floor
Then in the tree
High sits he
And mocks me under;
While all of them, all of them wonder, wonder
What I can be

I was a child, a little child,
I am a happy creature wild
I used to have to run or walk
As I was bid, be still or talk;
To shun the wind or sun or show'r,
And then come in at such an hour.
I was a child, a little child,
I am a happy creature wild.

For see I wander like a deer
 That sniffs about the furrowed bole
 Of some great tree, or starts in fear
 From every leaf that trembles near ;
 Or neighing like a frolic foal
 That prances in a field at play,
 I gallop farther on my way
 Sometimes a beech-mast tumbles thro',
 I strip it daintily to find
 The nut within its wooden rind,
 And nibbling sit as squirrels do.
 I was a child, a little child,
 I am a happy creature wild.

Now, now again,
 Reversing the spell,
 Turning this plain
 Little ring on my finger,
 See I regain
 Form of a child, spirit as well
 Yet I am free, no one can tell
 Margie to haste, come and not linger
 Turn it again, thrice must it turn,
 Thrice the sunlight flicker and burn
 Deep in the heart of its single gem—
 And see I ride from Jerusalem

I am a knight, the paynim horde
 Have felt the weight of this good sword
 About the sepulchre of Our Lord

'Tis a sinister woodland deep and wide,
 Alone I ride
 Saint Hubert scatter the demon breed !
 Mary Mother be my guide !
 Up the glade at rushing speed,
 What comes shining, what comes sweeping ?
 'Tis a band of mailed men
 And a lady passing fair,
 Whom they carry to their den
 Gleaming in her golden hair

Ha ! I come, like lightning leaping,
 Thrust and hew mid caiff clamour.
 Beat the stubborn thorn-bush down !
 Cleave and rend the bracken's crown !
 Not a stalk be left upright !
 Now they know the paynim's hammer,
 Now they know King Richard's knight.

Turn, turn again
 Magical ring
 I am a Dane
 Cunning and brave,
 A pirate king

Swiftly I come over the wave

The shore, the Saxon town I see.
 The smoke hangs blue on roof and tree
 At evening over the little town
 I hear the bells in the grey church tow'r.
 With fire and sword at midnight hour
 I mean to harry and burn it down
 But fierce as a wolf, as a raven wise,
 I come at first in a deep disguise
 To the little town
 And when I climb to the nursery yonder
 They'll call me Marjorie, and wonder
 Why I should want to run away
 And be as any rabbit wild ,
 For I shall seem to be a child
 Named Marjorie What would they say
 If they could know it was instead
 A pirate that they put to bed ?

CCLXXIV

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT

Alas ! the little child is dead.
 O sorrow for the downy head
 That used to keep his mother's arm
 And bosom warm,

And now the chilling earth instead
Must hide, for he is dead !

Mourn, mothers, ye who know how sweet
They were, the blossom-coloured feet
That in our dusty pathways yet
No print had set,
So that the world will scarcely mark
Their little track into the dark
Only for one the baby feet
Have left earth incomplete

They coldly lie, but she before
The hearth will chafe them now no more,
Nor swing the boy to let him leap,
Who scarce could creep,
In dainty dance upon the floor
For all his play-time's o'er

Nor from that slumber where he lies
Shall he with blue half-wakened eyes,
Stir at her shadow o'er him thrown
Or rustling gown,
And dream a smile because her face
Flits through some visionary place
She need no longer still her cries
Lest he uncloze his eyes

When last she wept—how many years
Ago it seems !—he dried her tears
With wandering touches velvet-sleek
Upon her cheek
Now on his fragile breast she bows
Her shaken mouth and heavy brows,
And holds him fast, while he nor fears
Nor wonders at her tears

Ye mothers, let her not alone
Make on this little dust her moan,
Be near with looks of love and touch
Not over-much
Her quivering grief with words, but wend
With her to-day made more than friend

By ancient mysteries of Earth,
By solemn pangs of death and birth,
Made consecrate, apart, unknown
Save unto you alone

How lightly borne the little bier,
With all its flowers ! And what is here,
That ye in long processions go,
Sombre and slow,
As who at famous obsequies
Mourn for a world bereaved ? The wise
Will ask in wonder and recall
Some larger grief, or prodigal
Rich waste of Nature , year by year
Things born to disappear

But here, within this narrow hearse,
The mystery of the Universe
Doth house as kingly and secure,
As vast and sure
As in the marble or the lead
That hold the world-subduing dead.
Its bare inscription doth contain
More than philosophers explain,
Or mightier poets can rehearse,
Making immortal verse

And who is she with veiled head ?
She had a name, but now instead
Another What she was before
She is no more,
Nor what she shall be In her mind
By ways unknown she seems to wind,
Some endless lapse of time to tread
Slowly behind the dead

Ay, this beyond her thought is true .
The seas have shaped their shores anew,
And stars in other courses roll
About the pole,
Since first this mourning way she went.
In Babylon she made lament,

And hath her ancient sorrow hid
 'Neath an Egyptian pyramid ,
 Yet shall through centuries waste and new
 The unchanging road pursue.

She mightier names and power hath known.
 For lilies on her pathway strown,
 Out of the unsounded gulf of Heaven
 The stars were given.

The deep of Earth's divine desire
 Surged round her feet in argent fire,
 Its passionate rumour, soft, immense,
 Rose up to her through frankincense ,
 She took the moon and Hera's throne,
 And Aphrodite's zone

Through warring chaos, primal gloom,
 Promethean shape she seems to loom,
 Kindling her hearth with holier flame.

Around it came
 Man that was beast, and where it burned
 A human fellowship he learned
 She first his shelter, she the nurse
 Of all he is, for her the curse
 Sprung where she made the desert bloom—
 The chain, the Titan's doom.

Adorn with flowers the darkling gate
 Where things majestic pass, with state
 Religious and with mourning eyes

Your ministries
 Perform, ye mothers Tell aloud
 How that the glorious and the proud
 The world's deep wave a moment ride
 Like foam, and fade upon its tide
 Tell them that Life alone is great,
 And Love and mortal Fate.

HENRY CHARLES BEECHING

CCLXXV

PRAYERS

God who created me
 Nimble and light of limb,
 In three elements free,
 To run, to ride, to swim .
 Not when the sense is dim,
 But now from the heart of joy,
 I would remember Him
 Take the thanks of a boy.

Jesu, King and Lord,
 Whose are my foes to fight,
 Gird me with Thy sword
 Swift and sharp and bright
 Thee would I serve if I might ,
 And conquer if I can,
 From day-dawn till night,
 Take the strength of a man.

Spirit of Love and Truth,
 Breathing in grosser clay,
 The light and flame of youth,
 Delight of men in the fray,
 Wisdom in strength's decay ,
 From pain, strife, wrong to be free,
 This best gift I pray,
 Take my spirit to Thee.

CCLXXVI

*GOING DOWNHILL ON A BICYCLE**(A Boy's Song)*

With lifted feet, hands still,
 I am poised, and down the hill
 Dart, with heedful mind ,
 The air goes by in a wind.

Swifter and yet more swift,
Till the heart with a mighty lift
Makes the lungs laugh, the throat cry —
' O bird, see , see, bird, I fly ! '

' Is this, is this your joy ?
O bird, then I, though a boy,
For a golden moment share
Your feathery life in air ! '

Say, heart, is there aught like this
In a world that is full of bliss ?
'Tis more than skating, bound
Steel-shod to the level ground.

Speed slackens now, I float
Awhile in my airy boat ,
Till, when the wheels scarce crawl,
My feet to the treadles fall

Alas, that the longest hill
Must end in a vale ; but still,
Who climbs with toil, whereso'er,
Shall find wings waiting there

JAMES KENNETH STEPHEN

CCLXXVII

BLUE HILLS AN ALLEGORY

Years ago, in the land of my birth,
When my head was little above the earth,
I stood by the side of the grass-blades tall,
And a quickset hedge was a mighty wall,
And a measureless forest I often found
In a swampy acre of rush-clad ground
But, when I could see it, the best of the view
Was a distant circle, the Hills of Blue

Higher we grow as the long years pass,
And I now look down on the growing grass ,
I see the top where I saw the side,
Some beauties are lost as the view grows wide,

I see over things that I couldn't see through ·
But my limit is still the Hills of Blue.

As a child I sought them, and found them not,
Footsore and weary, tired and hot,
They were still the bulwark of all I could see,
And still at a fabulous distance from me;
I wondered if age and strength could teach
How to traverse the plain, the mountains
 reach;
Meanwhile, whatever a child might do,
They still were far and they still were blue.

Well I've reached them at last, those distant
 Hills,
I've reached their base through a world of ills;
I have toiled and laboured and wandered far,
With my constant eyes on a shifting star:
And ever, as nearer I came, they grew,
Larger and larger, but ah! less blue

Green I have found them, green and brown,
Studded with houses, o'erhanging a town,
Feeding the plain below with streams,
Dappled with shadows and brightening with
 beams,
Image of scenes I had left behind,
Merely a group of the hilly kind:
And beyond them a prospect as fair to view
As the old, and bounded by Hills as blue.

But I will not seek those further Hills,
Nor travel the course of the outward rills;
I have lost the faith of my childhood's day;
Let me dream (it is only a dream) while I
 may;
I will put my belief to no cruel test:
As I doze on this green deceptive crest,
I will try to believe, as I used to do,
There are some Blue Hills which are really blue.

FRANCIS THOMPSON

CCLXXVIII

LITTLE JESUS

*Ex ore infantium, Deus, et lactentium
perfecisti laudem*

Little Jesus, wast Thou shy
Once, and just so small as I ?
And what did it feel like to be
Out of Heaven, and just like me ?
Didst Thou sometimes think of *there*,
And ask where all the angels were ?
I should think that I would cry
For my house all made of sky ,
I would look about the air,
And wonder where my angels were ,
And at waking 'twould distress me—
Not an angel there to dress me !

Hadst Thou ever any toys,
Like us little girls and boys ?
And didst Thou play in Heaven with all
The angels that were not too tall,
With stars for marbles ? Did the things
Play *Can you see me* ? through their wings ?
And did Thy Mother let Thee spoil
Thy robes with playing on *our* soil ?
How nice to have them always new
In Heaven, because 'twas quite clean blue !

Didst Thou kneel at night to pray,
And didst Thou join Thy hands, this way ?
And did they tire sometimes, being young,
And make the prayer seem very long ?
And dost Thou like it best, that we
Should join our hands to pray to Thee ?
I used to think, before I knew,
The prayer not said unless we do

And did Thy Mother at the night
Kiss Thee, and fold the clothes in right ?
And didst Thou feel quite good in bed,
Kissed, and sweet, and Thy prayers said ?

Thou canst not have forgotten all .
That it feels like to be small
And Thou know'st I cannot pray
To Thee in my father's way—
When Thou wast so little, say,
Couldst Thou talk Thy Father's way ?—

So, a little Child, come down
And hear a child's tongue like Thy own ,
Take me by the hand and walk,
And listen to my baby-talk
To Thy Father show my prayer
(He will look, Thou art so fair),
And say ' O Father, I, Thy Son,
Bring the prayer of a little one '

And He will smile, that children's tongue
Has not changed since Thou wast young !

CCLXXIX

DAISY

Where the thistle lifts a purple crown
Six foot out of the turf,
And the harebell shakes on the windy hill—
O the breath of the distant surf !—

The hills look over on the South,
And southward dreams the sea ,
And, with the sea-breeze hand in hand,
Came innocence and she

Where 'mid the gorse the raspberry
Red for the gatherer springs,
Two children did we stray and talk
Wise, idle, childish things.

She listened with big-lipped surprise,
 Breast-deep 'mid flower and spine
 Her skin was likè a grape, whose veins
 Run snow instead of wine

She knew not those sweet words she spake,
 Nor knew her own sweet way ,
 But there's never a 'bird, so sweet a song
 Thronged in whose throat that day !

Oh, there were flowers in Storrington
 On the turf and on the spray ,
 But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills
 Was the Daisy-flower that day !

Her beauty smoothed earth's furrowed face.
 She gave me tokens three —
 A look, a word of her winsome mouth,
 And a wild raspberry

A berry red, a guileless look,
 A still word,—strings of sand !
 And yet they made my wild, wild heart
 Fly down to her little hand.

For, standing artless as the air,
 And candid as the skies,
 She took the berries with her hand,
 And the love with her sweet eyes.

The fairest things have fleetest end :
 Their scent survives their close,
 But the rose's scent is bitterness
 To him that loved the rose.

She looked a little wistfully,
 Then went her sunshine way :—
 The sea's eye had a mist on it,
 And the leaves fell from the day.

She went her unremembering way,
 She went, and left in me
 The pang of all the partings gone,
 And partings yet to be

She left me marvelling why my soul
 Was sad that she was glad ,
 At all the sadness in the sweet,
 The sweetness in the sad.

Still, still I seemed to see her, still
 Look up with soft replies,
 And take the berries with her hand,
 And the love with her lovely eyes.

Nothing begins, and nothing ends,
 That is not paid with moan ,
 For we are born in other's pain,
 And perish in our own

CCLXXX

TO OLIVIA

I fear to love thee, Sweet, because
 Love's the ambassador of loss ,
 White flake of childhood, clinging so
 To my soiled raiment, thy shy snow
 At tenderest touch will shrink and go.
 Love me not, delightful child !
 My heart, by many snares beguiled,
 Has grown timorous and wild.
 It would fear thee not at all,
 Wert thou not so harmless-small
 Because thy arrows, not yet dire,
 Are still unbarbed with destined fire,
 I fear thee more than hadst thou stood
 Full-panoplied in womanhood

CCLXXXI

TO MONICA THOUGHT DYING

You, O the piteous you !
 Who all the long night through
 Anticipatedly
 Disclose yourself to me

Already in the ways
 Beyond our human comfortable days ;
 How can you deem what Death
 Impitiably saith
 To me, who listening wake
 For your poor sake ?
 When a grown woman dies,
 You know we think unceasingly
 What things she said, how sweet, how wise ,
 And these do make our misery
 But you were (you to me
 The dead anticipatedly !)
 You—eleven years, was't not, or so ?—
 Were just a child, you know ,
 And so you never said
 Things sweet immeditatably and wise
 To interdict from closure my wet eyes
 But foolish things, my dead, my dead !
 Little and laughable,
 Your age that fitted well
 And was it such things all unmemorable,
 Was it such things could make
 Me sob all night for your implacable sake ?

Yet, as you said to me,
 In pretty make-believe of revelry,
 So, the night long, said Death
 With his magniloquent breath ;
 (And that remembered laughter,
 Which in our daily uses followed after,
 Was all untuned to pity and to awe)
'A cup of chocolate,
One farthing is the rate,
You drink it through a straw.'

How could I know, how know
 Those laughing words when drenched with
 sobbing so ?
 Another voice than yours, than yours, he hath !
 My dear, was't worth his breath,
 His mighty utterance ?—yet he saith, and saith !

This dreadful Death to his own dreadfulness
 Doth dreadful wrong,
 This dreadful childish babble on his tongue !
 That iron tongue, made to speak sentences
 And wisdom insupportably complete,
 Why should it only say the long night through,
 In mimicry of you,—
 ' A cup of chocolate,
 One farthing is the rate,
You drink it through a straw, a straw, a straw !'

Oh, of all sentences,
 Piercingly incomplete !
 Why did you teach that fatal mouth to draw,
 Child, impermissible awe
 From your old trivialness ?
 Why have you done me this
 Most unsustainable wrong,
 And into Death's control
 Betrayed the secret places of my soul ?—
 Teaching him that his lips,
 Uttering their native earthquake and eclipse,
 Could never so avail
 To rend from hem to hem the ultimate veil
 Of this most desolate
 Spirit, and leave it stripped and desecrate,—
 Nay, never so have wrung
 From eyes and speech weakness unmanned,
 unmeet,
 As when his terrible dotage to repeat
 Its little lesson learneth at your feet ,
 As when he sits among
 His sepulchres, to play
 With broken toys your hand has cast away,
 With derelict trinkets of the darling young
 Why have you taught—that he might so complete
 His awful panoply
 From your cast playthings—why,
 This dreadful childish babble to his tongue,
 Dreadful and sweet ? •

CCLXXXII

THE CHILD-WOMAN

O thou most dear !
 Who art thy sex's complex harmony
 God-set more facilely ,
 To thee may love draw near
 Without one blame or fear,
 Unhidden save by his humility
 Thou Perseu.' Shield wherein I view secure
 The mirrored Woman's fateful-fair allure !
 Whom Heaven still leaves a twofold dignity,
 As girlhood gentle, and as boyhood free ,
 With whom no most diaphanous webs enwind
 The barèd limbs of the rebukeless mind
 Wild Dryad, all unconscious of thy tree,
 With which indissolubly
 The tyrannous time shall one day make thee
 whole ,
 Whose frank arms pass unfretted through its
 bole
 Who wear'st thy femininity
 Light as entrailèd blossoms, that shalt find
 It erelong silver shackles unto thee
 Thou whose young sex is yet but in thy soul ,—
 As hoarded in the vine
 Hang the gold skins of undelirious wine,
 As air sleeps, till it toss its limbs in breeze ,—
 In whom the mystery which lures and sunders,
 Grapples and thrusts apart, endears,
 stranges,
 —The dragon to its own Hesperides—
 Is gated under slow-revolving changes,
 Manifold doors of heavy-hungèd years —
 So once, ere Heaven's eyes were filled with
 wonders
 To see Laughter rise from Tears,
 Lay in beauty not yet mighty,
 Conchéd in translucencies,
 The antenatal Aphrodite,

Caved magically under magic seas ,
 Caved dreamlessly beneath the dreamful seas.

‘ Whose sex is in thy soul ! ’

What think we of thy soul ?

Which has no parts, and cannot grow,

Unfurled not from an embryo ,

Born of full stature, lineal to control ;

And yet a pigmy's yoke must undergo ;

Yet must keep pace and tarry, patient, kind,

With its unwilling scholar, the dull tardy mind ;

Must be obsequious to the body's powers,

Whose low hands mete its paths, set ope and
 close its ways ;

Must do obeisance to the days,

And wait the little pleasure of the hours ,

Yea, ripe for kingship, yet must be

Captive in statuted minority !

So is all power fulfilled, as soul in thee.

So still the ruler by the ruled takes rule,

And wisdom weaves itself i' the loom o' the fool.

The splendent sun no splendour can display,

Till on gross things he dash his broken ray,

From cloud and tree and flower re-tossed in
 prismatic spray.

Did not obstruction's vessel hem it in,

Force were not force, would spill itself in vain ,

We know the Titan by his champèd chain.

Stay is heat's cradle, it is rocked therein,

And by check's hand is burnished into light ;

If hate were none, would love burn lowlier
 bright ?

God's Fair were guessed scarce but for opposite
 sin ;

Yea, and His Mercy, I do think it well,

Is flashed back from the brazen gates of Hell.

The heavens decree

All power fulfil itself as soul in thee.

For supreme Spirit subject was to clay,

And Law from its own servants learned a law,

And Light besought a lamp unto its way,

And Awe was reined in awe,
 At one small house of Nazareth ,
 And Golgotha
 Saw Breath to breathlessness resign its breath,
 And Life do homage for its crown to death.

SIR RABINDRANATH TAGORE

CCLXXXIII

THE BEGINNING

' Where have I come from, where did you pick
 me up ? ' the baby asked its mother
 She answered half crying, half laughing, and
 clasping the baby to her breast,—
 ' You were hidden in my heart as its desire, my
 darling
 You were in the dolls of my childhood's games ,
 and when with clay I made the image of my
 god every morning, I made and unmade
 you then
 You were enshrined with our household deity,
 in his worship I worshipped you
 In all my hopes and my loves, in my life, in the
 life of my mother you have lived
 In the lap of the deathless Spirit who rules our
 home you have been nursed for ages
 When in girlhood my heart was opening its petals,
 you hovered as a fragrance about it
 Your tender softness bloomed in my youthful
 limbs, like a glow in the sky before the sunrise
 Heaven's first darling, twin-born with the
 morning light, you have floated down the
 stream of the world's life, and at last you
 have stranded on my heart
 As I gaze on your face, mystery overwhelms me ,
 you who belong to all have become mine
 For fear of losing you I hold you tight to my
 breast What magic has snared the world's
 treasure in these slender arms of mine ? '

CCLXXXIV

SUPERIOR

Mother, your baby is silly ! She is so absurdly
childish !

She does not know the difference between the
lights in the streets and the stars

When we play at eating with pebbles, she thinks
they are real food, and tries to put them
into her mouth

When I open a book before her and ask her to
learn her a, b, c, she tears the leaves with
her hands and roars for joy at nothing,
this is your baby's way of doing her lesson

When I shake my head at her in anger and scold
her and call her naughty, she laughs and
thinks it great fun

Everybody knows that father is away, but if in
play I call aloud ' Father,' she looks about
her in excitement and thinks that father is
near

When I hold my class with the donkeys that our
washerman brings to carry away the clothes
and I warn her that I am the schoolmaster,
she will scream for no reason and call me
dādā

Your baby wants to catch the moon She is so
funny .

Mother, your baby is silly, she is so absurdly
childish !

KATHARINE TYNAN HINKSON

CCLXXXV

THE MEETING

As I went up and he came down, my little six-
year boy,

Upon the stairs we met and kissed, I and my
tender Joy

Oh ! fond and true, as lovers do, we kissed and
clasped and parted ;
And I went up and he went down, refreshed and
happy-hearted

What need was there for any words, his face
against my face ?
And in the silence heart to heart spoke for a
little space
Of tender things, and thoughts on wings, and
secrets none discovers ,
And I went up and he went down, a pair of
happy lovers

His clinging arms about my neck, what need was
there for words ?
Oh, little heart that beat so fast like any fluttering
bird's !
' I love,' his silence said , ' I love,' my silence
answered duly ,
And I went up and he went down comforted
wonderfully

CCLXXXVI

THE MOTHER

Great passions I awake that must
Bow any woman to the dust
With fear lest she should fail to rise
As high as those enamoured eyes

Now, for these flying days and sweet,
I sit in Beauty's Mercy-Seat
My smiles, my favours I award,
Since I am beautiful, adored

They praise my cheeks, my lips, my eyes,
With Love's most exquisite flatteries,
Covet my hands that they may kiss
And to their ardent bosoms press.

My foot upon the nursery stair
 Makes them a music rich and rare ;
 My skirt that rustles as I come
 For very rapture strikes them dumb

What jealousies of word and glance !
 The light of my poor countenance
 Lights up their world that else were dear
 ' But you are lovely, mother dear ! '

I go not to my grave but I
 Know Beauty's full supremacy .
 Like Cleopatra's self, I prove
 The very heights and depths of Love.

So to be loved, so to be wooed,
 Oh, more than mortal woman should !
 What if she fail or fall behind !
 Lord, make me worthy, keep them blind !

SIR OWEN SEAMAN

CCLXXXVII

IN MEMORIAM ' LEWIS CARROLL '

Lover of children ! Fellow heir with those
 Of whom the imperishable kingdom is !
 No longer dreaming, now your spirit knows
 The unimagined mysteries.

Darkly as in a glass our faces look
 To read ourselves, if so we may, aright ;
 You, like the maiden in your faerie book,
 You step beyond and see the light !

The heart you wore beneath your pedant's
 cloak
 Only to children's hearts you gave away ;
 Yet unaware in half the world you woke
 The slumbering charm of childhood's day.

We older children, too, our loss lament,
We of the ' Table Round ' remembering well
How he, our comrade, with his pencil lent
Your fancy's speech a firmer spell

Master of rare woodcraft, by sympathy's
Sure touch he caught your visionary gleams
And made your fame, the dreamer's, one with
his,
The wise interpreter of dreams.

Farewell, but near our hearts we have you yet,
Holding our heritage with loving hand,
Who may not follow where your feet are set
Upon the ways of Wonderland.

ALICE MEYNELL

CCLXXXVIII

THE SHEPHERDESS

She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep
Her flocks are thoughts She keeps them white ,
She guards them from the steep ;
She feeds them on the fragrant height,
And folds them in for sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright,
Dark valleys safe and deep
Into that tender breast at night
The chastest stars may peep
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,
Though gay they run and leap.
She is so circumspect and right ,
She has her soul to keep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

CCLXXXIX

YOUR OWN FAIR YOUTH

Your own fair youth, you care so little for it,
 Smiling towards Heaven, you would not stay
 the advances
 Of time and change upon your happiest fancies
 I keep your golden hour and will restore it
 If ever, in time to come, you would explore it—
 Your old self, whose thoughts w nt like last
 year's pansies,
 Look unto me no mirror keeps its glances ,
 In my unfailing praises now I store it
 To guard all joys of yours from Time's estranging,
 I shall be then a treasury where your gay,
 Happy, and pensive past unaltered is
 I shall be then a garden charmed from changing,
 In which your June has never passed away.
 Walk there awhile among my memories

CCXC

THE MODERN MOTHER

Oh, what a kiss
 With filial passion overcharged is this !
 To this misgiving breast
 This child runs, as a child ne'er ran to rest
 Upon the light heart and the unoppressed.
 Unhoped, unsought !
 A little tenderness, this mother thought
 The utmost of her meed
 She looked for gratitude , content indeed
 With thus much that her nine years' love had
 bought.
 Nay, even with less.
 This mother, giver of life, death, peace, distress,
 Desired ah ! not so much
 Thanks as forgiveness , and the passing touch
 Expected, and the slight, the brief caress.

O filial light
 Strong in these childish eyes, these new, these
 bright
 Intelligible stars ! their rays
 Are near the constant earth, guides in the maze,
 Natural, true, keen in this dusk of days

CCXCI

TO SYLVIA

(Two years old)

Long life to thee, long virtue, long delight,
 A flowering early and late !
 Long beauty, grave to thought and gay to sight,
 A distant date !

Yet, as so many poets love to sing
 (When young the child will die),
 ' No autumn will destroy this lovely spring,'
 So, Sylvia, I.

I'll write thee dapper verse and touching rhyme ,
 ' Our eyes shall not behold—'
 The commonplace shall serve for thee this time
 ' Never grow old.'

For there's another way to stop thy clock
 Within my cherishing heart,
 To carry thee unalterable, and lock
 Thy youth apart :

Thy flower, for me, shall evermore be hid
 In this close bud of thine,
 Not, Sylvia, by thy death—O God forbid !—
 Merely 'y mine

SIR HENRY NEWBOLT

CCXCII

IMOGEN

(A lady of tender age)

Ladies, where were your bright eyes glancing,
Where were they glancing yesternight ?
Saw ye Imogen dancing, dancing,
Imogen dancing all in white ?
Laughed she not with a pure delight,
Laughed she not with a joy serene,
Stepped she not with a grace entrancing,
Slenderly girt in silken sheen ?
All through the night from dusk to daytime
Under her feet the hours were swift,
Under her feet the hours of playtime
Rose and fell with a rhythmic lift ·
Music set her adrift, adrift,
Music eddying towards the day
Swept her along as brooks in Maytime
Carry the freshly falling May
Ladies, life is a changing measure,
Youth is a lilt that endeth soon ;
Pluck ye never so fast at pleasure,
Twilight follows the longest noon
Nay, but here is a lasting boon,
Life for hearts that are old and chill,
Youth undying for hearts that treasure
Imogen dancing, dancing still.

ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON

CCXCIII

A CHILD'S GARDEN

The garden wastes · the little child is grown ;
Rank with high weeds and blossoms overblown,
His tiny territory boasts no more
The dainty many-coloured mien it wore

In the old time,
 When the stout toiler of the summer's prime
 Wrought in his glory, sun-flushed and bemired,
 With spade and water-can, nor ever tired,
 Yet found the bedward stair so steep to climb

Pink and forget-me-not and mignonette,
 Red double daisies accurately set,
 We had them all by heart and more beside,
 Purple and yellow pansies, solemn-eyed
 As little owlets in their tufted bowers .
 The weeds have come and driven forth the
 flowers

Summer with all her roses onward hastes.
 The garden wastes—
 This poor small garden, sweet in summers known
 The garden wastes . the little child is grown

How good those summers, gay and golden-lit,
 When down the walks the white-frocked form
 would flit,

Laden and all-triumphant with its load ,
 That narrow pleasaunce, and the spoils of it !
 The various spoils of it so proudly shown,
 So royally bestowed . .

Green wrinkled cress and rosy radish node,
 The unsunned strawberry's dimly coral cone,—
 There be none such treasures now . the child
 is grown

The fish-tailed merchild carved in crumbling stone
 Wreathed with loose straggling roses, reigns alone,
 Th'abandoned idol still smiles gravely on
 The other child is gone

New play, new paths, the old sweet hours disown ,
 Poor graven image on your rain-worn throne
 Smiling the foolish smile,

Rose petals fall around you yet awhile,
 Nor may I mourn this little plot defaced,
 The bare nest whence the fledging bird has flown
 His garden waste :

The little child is grown.

RUDYARD KIPLING

CCXCIV

THE SERVING-MEN

I keep six honest serving-men
 (They taught me all I knew) ,
 Their names are What and Why and When
 And How and Where and Who
 I send them over land and sea,
 I send them east and west ,
 But after they have worked for me,
 I give them all a rest

 I let them rest from nine till five,
 For I am busy then,
 As well as breakfast, lunch and tea,
 For they are hungry men
 But different folk have different views ,
 I know a person small—
 She keeps ten million serving-men,
 Who get no rest at all !
 She sends 'em abroad on her own affairs,
 From the second she opens her eyes—
 One million Hows, two million Wheres,
 And seven million Whys !

GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL (' A E ')

CCXCV

RECONCILIATION

By the hand of a child I am led to the throne
 of the King
 For a touch that now fevers me not is for-
 gotten and far,
 And His infinite sceptred hands that sway us
 can bring
 Me in dreams from the laugh of a child to the
 song of a star
 On the laugh of a child I am borne to the joy
 of the King.

LAURENCE BINYON

CCXCVI

LITTLE HANDS

Soft little hands that stray and clutch,
 Like fern-fronds curl and uncurl bold,
 While baby faces lie in such
 Close sleep as flowers at night that fold,
 What is it you would clasp and hold,
 Wandering outstretched with wilful touch ?
 O fingers small of shell-tipped rose,
 How should you know you hold so much ?
 Two full hearts beating you enclose—
 Hopes, fears, prayers, longings, joys and woes—
 All yours to hold, O little hands !
 More, more than wisdom understands
 And love, love only, knows

CCXCVII

*THE LITTLE DANCERS A LONDON
VISION*

Lonely, save for a few faint stars, the sky
 Dreams, and lonely, below, the little street
 Into its gloom retires, secluded and shy
 Scarcely the dumb roar enters this soft retreat,
 And all is dark, save where come flooding rays
 From a tavern window there, to the brisk
 measure
 Of an organ that down in an alley merrily
 plays,
 Two children, all alone and no one by,
 Holding their tatter'd frocks, through an airy
 maze
 Of motion, lightly threaded with nimble feet,
 Dance sedately face to face they gaze,
 Their eyes shining, grave with a perfect pleasure.

HILAIRE BELLOC

CCXCVIII

*DEDICATION ON THE GIFT OF A
BOOK TO A CHILD*

Child ! do not throw this book about '
Refrain from the unholy pleasure
Of cutting all the pictures out !
Preserve it as your chiefest treasure.

Child, have you never heard it said
That you are heir to all the ages ?
Why, then, your hands were never made
To tear these beautiful thick pages !

Your little hands were made to take
The better things and leave the worse ones :
They also may be used to shake
The Massive Paws of Elder Persons

And when your prayers complete the day,
Darling, your little tiny hands
Were also made, I think, to pray
For men that lose their fairylands

FORD MADOX HUEFFER

CCXCIX

TO CHRISTINA AT NIGHTFALL

Little thing, ah, little mouse,
Creeping through the twilit house,
To watch within the shadow of my chair
With large blue eyes ; the firelight on your hair
Doth glimmer gold and faint,
And on your woollen gown
That folds adown
From steadfast little face to square-set feet.

Ah, sweet ! ah, little one ! so like a carven saint,
 With your unflinching eyes, unflinching face,
 Like a small ange^l carved in a high place,
 Watching unmoved across a gabled town ,
 When I am weak and old,
 And lose my grip, and crave my small reward
 Of tolerance and tenderness and ruth,
 The children of your dawning day shall hold
 The reins we drop and wield the judge's sword,
 And your swift feet shall tread upon my heels,
 And I be Ancient Error, you New Truth,
 And I be crushed by your advancing wheels . . .

Good-night ! The fire is burning low,
 Put out the lamp ,
 Lay down the weary little head
 Upon the small white bed
 Up from the sea the night winds blow
 Across the hill across the marsh ,
 Chill and harsh, harsh and damp,
 The night winds blow.

But, while the slow hours go,
 I, who must fall before you, late shall wait and keep
 Watch and ward,
 Vigil and guard,
 Where you sleep
 Ah, sweet ! do you the like where I lie dead.

WALTER DE LA MARE

ccc

THE FUNERAL

They dressed us up in black,
 Susan and Tom and me ,
 And, walking through the fields
 All beautiful to see,
 With branches high in the air
 And daisy and buttercup,
 We heard the lark in the clouds,—
 In black dressed up.

They took us to the graves,
Susan and Tom and me,
Where the long grasses grow
And the funeral tree
We stood and watched ; and the wind
Came softly out of the sky
And blew in Susan's hair,
As I stood close by

Back through the fields we came,
Tom and Susan and me,
And we sat in the nursery together,
And had our tea
And, looking out of the window,
I heard the thrushes sing ,
But Tom fell asleep in his chair.
He was so tired, poor thing

CCCI

ENVOY

Child, do you love the flower
Ashine with colour and dew
Lighting its transient hour ?
So I love you.

The lambs in the mead are at play,
'Neath a hurdle the shepherd's asleep,
From height to height of the day
The sunbeams sweep

Evening will come And alone
The dreamer the dark will beguile ;
All the world will be gone
For a dream's brief while.

Then I shall be old ; and away ·
And you, with sad joy in your eyes,
Will brood over children at play
With as loveful surmise.

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

CCCII

THE SONG OF THE CHILDREN

The World is ours till sunset,

Holly and fire and snow ;

And the name of our dead brother

Who loved us long ago.

The grown folk mighty and cunning,

They write his name in gold ;

But we can tell a little

Of the million tales he told.

He taught them laws and watchwords,

To preach and struggle and pray ;

But he taught us deep in the hayfield

The games that the angels play.

Had he stayed here for ever,

Their world would be wise as ours—

And the king be cutting capers,

And the priest be picking flowers.

But the dark day came : they gathered :

On their faces we could see

They had taken and slain our brother

And hanged him on a tree.

LADY GLENCONNER

CCCIII

THE MOTHER

The budding branches spread their leaves

To catch the gently breathing air,

The Mother's heart recounts her sheaves,

Her harvest-sheaves of love and care,

Her nine months' joy of happy life,

Of quiet dreams and blessed days,

Of peace that even calmed the Strife,

And steeped her in a golden haze,

—A nimbus—of out-shed delight
 Whose source so deeply in her lies,
 As to give stature to her height,
 And visions that outshine her eyes.

*O heart, that desolation knows,
 O couch, where hooded sorrows sit,
 O Mother's milk, that idly flows,
 And no soft lips to gather it.*

She rises with the rising Sun,
 Her bare feet brush the glittering dew,
 She hears the crystal waters run,
 The throstle with his note so true ;
 She sees the gentle listening hare,
 Come limping through the tangled grass,
 The kine, too indolent to stare,
 Or lift their heads to see her pass ;
 She sees the sunlight on the Ridge,
 She hears the swerving plover's cry,
 The water weeds above the bridge,
 The soft clouds sailing in the sky—
 Are each and all within her sight,
 A joy too poignant to be borne,
 She lifts both hands towards the light,
 That floods the fields of springing corn
 Her thoughts rise with the mist's pale wreath,
 She watches sedge and osier grow,
 And murmurs, with exalted breath,
 ' *All this—all this—my Babe shall know.*'

' *Hush,*' the wind to the flowers is singing,
 ' *Hush,*' it sings to the clovers deep,
 ' *Hush, hush,*' to the tall grass swinging,
 ' *Fall asleep*'

The days sweep by on burnished wing,
 The thrushes herald in the morn,
 The Mother's heart awakes to sing,
 ' *Soon—soon—my Baby will be born*'
 Her joys of hope are manifold,
 No pen may write, no tongue may speak—

*' O patient love, soon—soon I'll hold
 The little hand against my cheek . . '*
 What are the wings in the Ilex crying ?
*' Fruitless labour and garnered dearth. . . .
 Why should the little form be lying,
 Under the earth ? '*
' Hush—hush '—the scythes are saying,
' Hush and heed not, all things pass.'
' Hush—hush '—the scythes are swaying
 Over the grass.

SAROJINI NAIDU

CCCIV

THE QUEEN'S RIVAL

I

Queen Gulnaar sat on her ivory bed,
 Around her countless treasures were spread ;
 Her chamber walls were richly inlaid
 With agate, porphyry, onyx and jade ;
 The tissues that veiled her delicate breast
 Glowed with the hues of a lapwing's crest ;
 But still she gazed in her mirror and sighed :
' O King, my heart is unsatisfied.'
 King Feroz bent from his ebony seat :
*' Is thy least desire unfulfilled, O Sweet ?
 ' Let thy mouth speak and my life be spent
 To clear the sky of thy discontent '
 ' I tire of my beauty, I tire of this
 Empty splendour and shadowless bliss ;
 ' With none to envy and none gainsay,
 No savour or salt hath my dream or day.'*
 Queen Gulnaar sighed like a murmuring rose :
' Give me a rival, O King Feroz.'

II

King Feroz spoke to his Chief Vizier :
' Lo ' ere to-morrow's dawn be here,
' Send forth my messengers over the sea,
To seek seven beautiful brides for me ,
' Radiant of feature and regal of m'en,
Seven handmaids meet for the Persian Queen '
Seven new moon tides at the Vesper call,
King Feroz led to Queen Gulnaar's hall
A young queen eyed like the morning star .
' I bring thee a rival, O Queen Gulnaar '
But still she gazed in her mirror and sighed .
' O King, my heart is unsatisfied.'
Seven queens shone round her ivory bed,
Like seven soft gems on a silken thread,
Like seven fair lamps in a royal tower,
Like seven bright petals of Beauty's flower
Queen Gulnaar sighed like a murmuring rose :
' Where is my rival, O King Feroz ? '

III

When spring winds wakened the mountain floods,
And kindled the flame of the tulip buds,
When bees grew loud and the days grew long,
And the peach groves thrilled to the oriole's song,
Queen Gulnaar sat on her ivory bed,
Decking with jewels her exquisite head ;
And still she gazed in her mirror and sighed :
' O King, my heart is unsatisfied '
Queen Gulnaar's daughter two springtimes old,
In blue robes bordered with tassels of gold,
Ran to her knee like a wildwood fay,
And plucked from her hand the mirror away.

Quickly she set on her own light curls
 Her mother's fillet, with fringes of pearls ;
 Quickly she turned with a child's caprice
 And pressed on the mirror a swift, glad kiss
 Queen Gulnaar laughed like a tremulous rose :
 ' Here is my rival, O King Feroz.'

GEOFFREY WINTHROP YOUNG

CCCX

JENNY

There are some children in the field at play,
 Laughing^g delightfully ,
 I cannot hear a word of what they say :
 Just a clean noise of youth, filling the ear
 And brimming over on the heart, wind-clear.

The hedge is launching buds of April green
 On a blue river of sky,
 Nothing to all the wonders we have seen
 That held the glance and thought , but this
 leaps through
 Straight from the eye to the heart, with a cry—
 ' I am true.'

That chaffinch singing on a restless tree
 Somewhere behind the thorn,
 Is far more real to me
 Than all the world's old wisdom I have read
 And all the wise things wiser folk have said. . .

The children have stopped playing : three or four
 Are scampering home this way
 Behind the hedge Just what they seem, no
 more ,
 Flicker of brown feet, to the finch's song,
 In the green May-light when the days grow long.

Yet how much more they mean than what they
are !

Childhood, and song, and spring,
Innocent messengers, they bring from far
Feelings more real than nature's counterpart,
Childhood, and song, and springtide to the heart.

Suppose I were to call to that wee mite,
Whose hat like a stray wing
Streams from one cherub shoulder in her flight
Along the ditch—' Heart, what do they call
you ? '

Perhaps she'd answer ' Jenny,' and smile too.

But the brown lifted lashes would disclose
Worlds of another name,
The truth, that makes the beauty of the rose,
Trust, that accepts known and unknown as
friend,
Light, that immortal love alone could lend. . . .

Jenny will grow up complex ; be called Jane :
Truth must find other ways

Ah well ! the finch will surely sing again :
Who knows ? perhaps, out of her little meenie
To some one Jenny may be always ' Jenny.'

WILFRID WILSON GIBSON

CCCVI

THE SHOP

Tin-tinkle-tinkle-tinkle, went the bell,
As I pushed in ; and, once again, the smell
Of groceries, and news-sheets freshly-printed,
That always greeted me when I looked in
To buy my evening paper : but, to-night,
I wondered not to see the well-known face,
With kind, brown eyes, and ever-friendly smile
Behind the counter ; and to find the place
Deserted at this hour, and not a light
In either window. Waiting there a while,

Though wondering at what change these changes
hinted,

I yet was grateful, for the quiet gloom—
Lit only by a gleam from the back-room,
And, here and there, a glint of glass and tin—
So pleasant, after all the flare and din
And hubbub of the foundry : and my eyes,
Still tingling from the smoke, were glad to rest
Upon the ordered shelves, so neatly dressed
That, even in the dusk, they seemed to tell
No little of the hand that kept them clean,
And of the head that sorted things so well
That naught of waste or worry could be seen,
And kept all sweet with ever-fresh supplies
And as I thought upon her quiet way,
Wondering what could have got her, that she'd
left

The shop, unlit, untended, and bereft
Of her kind presence, overhead I heard
A tiptoe creak, as though somebody stirred,
With careful step, across the upper floor
Then all was silent, till the back-room door
Swung open ; and her husband hurried in
He feared he'd kept me, waiting in the dark ;
And he was sorry . but his wife who served
The customers at night-time usually—
While he made up the ledger after tea,
Was busy, when I . . . Well, to tell the truth,
They were in trouble, for their little son
Had come in ill from school the doctor said
Pneumonia . . . they'd been putting him to bed .
Perhaps I'd heard them, moving overhead,
For boards would creak, and creak, for all your
care.

They hoped the best , for he was young ; and
youth

Could come through much ; and all that could
be done

Would be . . then he stood, listening, quite
unnerved,

As though he heard a footstep on the stair,

Though I heard nothing : but at my remark
About the fog and sleet, he turned,
And answered quickly, as there burned
In his brown eyes an eager flame .
The raw and damp were much to blame :
If but his son might breathe West-country air !
A certain Cornish village he could name
Was just the place ; if they could send him
there,

And only for a week, he'd come back stronger . . .
And then, again, he listened and I took
My paper, and went, afraid to keep him longer ,
And left him standing with that haggard look.

Next night, as I pushed in, there was no tinkle :
And, glancing up, I saw the bell was gone ,
Although, in either window, the gas shone ;
And I was greeted by a cheery twinkle
Of burnished tins and bottles from the shelves :
And now, I saw the father busy there
Behind the counter, cutting with a string
A bar of soap up for a customer,
With weary eyes, and jerky, harassed air,
As if his mind were hardly on the task .
And when 'twas done, and parcelled' up for
her,

And she had gone, he turned to me, and said :
He thought that folks might cut their soap them-
selves

'Twas nothing much . but any little thing,
At such a time . . . And, having little doubt
The boy was worse, I did not like to ask ;
So picked my paper up, and hurried out

And, all next day, amid the glare and clang
And clatter of the workshop, his words rang ;
And kept on ringing, in my head a-ring ,
But any little thing at such a time .
And kept on chiming to the anvils' chime :
But any little thing at such a time .
And they were hissed and sputtered in the sizzle
Of water on hot iron : little thing . . .

At such a time and, when I left, at last,
 The smoke and steam, and walked through
 the cold drizz'e,
 The lumbering of the 'buses as they passed
 Seemed full of it ; and to the passing feet,
 The words kept patter, patter, with dull beat

I almost feared to turn into their street,
 Lest I should find the blinds down in the shop :
 And, more than once, I'd half-a-mind to stop,
 And buy my paper from the yelling boys,
 Who darted all about with such a noise
 That I half-wondered, in a foolish way,
 How they could shriek so, knowing that the
 sound

Must worry children, lying ill in bed . . .
 Then, thinking even they must earn their bread,
 As I eared mine, and scarce as noisily !
 I wandered on, and very soon I found
 I'd followed where my thoughts had been all day,
 And stood before the shop, relieved to see
 The gases burning, and no window-blind
 Of blank foreboding With an easier mind,
 I entered slowly, and was glad to find
 The father by the counter, 'waiting me,
 With paper ready and a cheery face
 Yes ! yes ! the boy was better took the turn,
 Last night, just after I had left the place
 He feared that he'd been short and cross last
 night . . .

But, when a little child was suffering,
 It worried you and any little thing,
 At such a moment made you cut up rough
 Though, now that he was going on all right .
 Well, he'd have patience, now, to be polite !
 And, soon as ever he was well enough,
 The boy should go to Cornwall for a change—
 Should go to his own home, for he, himself,
 Was Cornish, born and bred, his wife as well :
 And still his parents lived in the old place—
 A little place, as snug as snug could be . . .

Where apple-blossom dipped into the sea . . .
Perhaps, to strangers' ears, that sounded
strange—

But not to any Cornishman who knew
How sea and land ran up into each other ;
And how, all round each wide, blue estuary,
The flowers were blooming to the waters' edge :
You'd come on blue-bells like a sea of blue . . .
But they would not be out for some while yet . .
'Twould be primroses, blowing everywhere,
Primroses, and primroses, and primr ses . .
You'd never half-know what primroses were,
Unless you'd seen them growing in the West ,
But, having seen, would never more forget
Why, every bank and every lane and hedge
Was just one blaze of yellow ; and the smell,
When the sun shone upon them, after wet . .
And his eyes sparkled, as he turned to 'ell
A penny loaf and half-an-ounce of tea
To a poor child, who waited patiently,
With hacking cough that tore her hollow chest :
And, as she went out, clutching tight the change,
He muttered to himself: It's strange, it's
strange

That little ones should suffer so. . . The light
Had left his eyes : but when he turned to me,
I saw a flame leap in them, hot and bright
I'd like to take them all, he said, to-night !

And, in the workshop, all through the next
day,
The anvils had another tune to play . . .
Primroses, and primroses, and primroses :
The bellows puffing out: It's strange, it's
strange

That little ones should suffer so . . .
And now, my hammer, at a blow :
I'd like to take them all, to-night !
And in the clouds of steam and white-hot glow
I seemed to see primroses everywhere,
Primroses, and primroses, and primroses.

And each night after that I heard the boy
 Was mending quickly, and would soon be well
 Till one night I was startled by the bell—
 Tin-tinkle-tinkle-tinkle, loud and clear;
 And tried to hush it, lest the lad should hear.
 But, when the father saw me clutch the thing,
 He said the boy had missed it yesterday;
 And wondered why he could not hear it ring;
 And wanted it; and had to have his way
 And then, with brown eyes burning with deep joy,
 Told me his Jon was going to the West—
 Was going home. . . the doctor thought, next week,
 He'd be quite well enough. the way was long;
 But trains were quick, and he would soon be
 there:

And on the journey he'd have every care,
 His mother being with him it was best,
 That she should go for he would find it strange,
 The little chap, at first. . . she needed change. . .
 And, when they'd had a whiff of Western air!
 'Twould cost a deal, and there was naught to
 spare:

But, what was money, if you hadn't health
 And, what more could you buy, if you'd the
 wealth. . .

Yes! 'twould be lonely for himself, and rough;
 Though, on the whole, he'd manage well enough
 He'd have a lot to do and there was naught
 Like work to keep folk cheerful when the hand
 Was busy, you had little time for thought,
 And thinking was the mischief. . . and 'twas grand
 To know that they'd be happy. Then the bell
 Went tinkle-tinkle; and he turned to sell

One night he greeted me with face that shone,
 Although the eyes were wistful; they were gone—
 Had gone this morning, he was glad to say.
 And, though 'twas sore work, setting them away,
 Still, 'twas the best for them. . . and they
 would be

Already in the cottage by the sea. . .

He spoke no more of them ; but turned his head ;
And said he wondered if the price of bread . . .
And, as I went again into the night,
I saw his eyes were glistening in the light.

And, two nights after that, he'd got a letter :
And all was well . the boy was keeping better ,
And was as happy as a child could be,
All day with the primroses and the sea,
And pigs ! Of all the wonders of the West,
His mother wrote, he liked the pigs the best
And now the father laughed until the tears
Were in his eyes, and chuckled Ay ! he knew !
Had he not been a boy there once, himself ?
He'd liked pigs, too, when he was his son's years.
And then, he reached a half-loaf from the shelf ;
And twisted up a farthing's worth of tea,
And farthing's worth of sugar, for the child,
The same poor child who waited patiently,
Still shaken by a hacking, racking cough.

And all next day the anvils rang with jigs :
The bellows roared and rumbled with loud
laughter,
Until it seemed the workshop had gone wild,
And it would echo, echo, ever after
The tune the hammers tinkled on and off,
A silly tune of primroses and pigs . . .
Of all the wonders of the West
He liked the pigs, he liked the pigs the best !

Next night, as I went in, I caught
A strange, fresh smell. The postman had just
brought
A precious box from Cornwall, and the shop
Was lit with primroses, that lay atop
A Cornish pasty, and a pot of cream .
And as, with gentle hands, the father lifted
The flowers his little son had plucked for him,
He stood a moment in a far-off dream,
As though in glad remembrances he drifted
On Western seas : and, as his eyes grew dim,

He stooped, and buried them in deep, sweet bloom .

Till, hearing once again the poor child's cough,
He served her hurriedly and sent her off,
Quite happily, with thin hands filled with
flowers

And as I followed to the street, the gloom
Was starred with primroses ; and many hours
The strange, shy flickering surprise
Of that child's keen, enchanted eyes
Lit up my heart, and brightened my dull room.

Then, many nights the foundry kept me late
With overtime , and I was much too tired
To go round by the shop , but made for bed
As straight as I could go until one night
We'd left off earlier, though 'twas after eight,
I thought I'd like some news about the boy
I found the shop untended , and the bell
Tin-tinkle-tinkle-tinkled all in vain
And then I saw, through the half-curtained pane,
The back-room was a very blaze of joy
And knew the mother and son had come safe
back.

And as I slipped away, now all was well,
I heard the boy shriek out, in shrill delight :
' And, father, all the little pigs were black ! '

ALFRED NOYES

CCCVII

SLUMBER-SONGS OF THE MADONNA

PRELUDE

Dante saw the great white Rose
Half unclosed ,
Dante saw the golden bees
Gathering from its heart of gold
Sweets untold,
Love's most honeyed harmonies.

Dante saw the threefold bow
 Strangely glow,
 Saw the Rainbow Vision rise,
 And the Flame that wore the crown
 Bending down
 O'er the flowers of Paradise.

Something yet remained, it seems ;
 In his dreams
 Dante missed—as angels may
 In their white and burning bliss—
 Some small kiss
 Mortals meet with every day.

Italy in splendour faints
 'Neath her saints !
 O, her great Madonnas, too,
 Faces calm as any moon
 Glows in June,
 Hooded with the night's deep blue !

What remains ? I pass and hear
 Everywhere,
 Ay, or see in silent eyes
 Just the song she still would sing
 Thus—a-swing
 O'er the cradle where He lies.

I

Sleep, little baby, I love thee ,
 Sleep, little king, I am bending above thee !
 How should I know what to sing
 Here in my arms as I swing thee to sleep ?
 Hushaby low,
 Rockaby so,
 Kings may have wonderful jewels to bring,
 Mother has only a kiss for her king !
 Why should my singing so make me to weep ?
 Only I know that I love thee, I love thee,
 Love thee, my little one, sleep.

II

Is it a dream ? Ah yet, it seems
 Not the same as other dreams !
 I can but think that angels sang
 When thou wast born, in the starry sky,
 And that their golden harps out-rang
 While the silver clouds went by !

The morning sun shuts out the stars,
 Which are much loftier than the sun ;
 But, could we burst our prison-bars
 And find the Light whence light begun,
 The dreams that heralded thy birth
 Were truer than the truths of earth ;
 And, by that far immortal Gleam
 Soul of my soul, I still would dream !

A ring of light was round thy head,
 The great-eyed oxen nigh thy bed
 Their cold and innocent noses bowed !
 Their sweet breath rose like an incense cloud
 In the blurred and mystic lanthorn light.
 About the middle of the night
 The black door blazed like some great star
 With a glory from afar,
 Or like some mighty chrysolite
 Wherein an angel stood with white
 Blinding arrowy bladed wings
 Before the throne of the King of kings ;
 And, through it, I could dimly see
 A great steed tethered to a tree.

Then, with crimson gems aflame
 Through the door the three kings came,
 And the black Ethiop unrolled
 The richly brodered cloth of gold,
 And poured forth before thee there
 Gold and frankincense and myrrh !

III

See, what a wonderful smile ! Does it mean
 That my little one knows of my love ?
 Was it meant for an angel that passed unseen,
 And smiled at us both from above ?
 Does it mean that he knows of the birds and
 the flowers
 That are waiting to sweeten his childhood's
 hours,
 And the tales I shall tell and the games he will
 play,
 And the songs we shall sing and the prayers we
 shall pray
 In his boyhood's May,
 He and I, one day ?

IV

For in the warm blue summer weather
 We shall laugh and love together ·
 I shall watch my baby growing,
 I shall guide his feet,
 When the orange trees are blowing
 And the winds are heavy and sweet !
 When the orange orchards whiten
 I shall see his great eyes brighten
 To watch the long-legged camels going
 Up the twisted street,
 When the orange trees are blowing
 And the winds are sweet.
*What does it mean ? Indeed, it seems
 A dream ! Yet not like other dreams !*
 We shall walk in pleasant vales,
 Listening to the shepherd's song :
 I shall tell him lovely tales
 All day long ·
 He shall laugh while mother sings
 Tales of fishermen and kings
 He shall see them come and go
 O'er the wistful sea,

Where rosy oleanders blow
 Round blue Lake Galilee,
 Kings with fishers' ragged coats
 And silver nets across their boats,
 Dipping through the starry glow,
 With crowns for him and me !

Ah, no ;
 'Crowns for him, not me !

*Rockaby so ! Indeed, it seems
 A dream ! Yet not like other dreams !*

V

Ah, see what a wonderful smile again !
 Shall I hide it away in my heart,
 To remember one day in a world of pain
 When the years have torn us apart,
 Little babe,
 When the years have torn us apart ?
 Sleep, my little one, sleep,
 Child with the wonderful eyes,
 Wild miraculous eyes,
 Deep as the skies are deep !
 What star-bright glory of tears
 Waits in you now for the years
 That shall bid you waken and weep ?
 Ah, in that day, could I kiss you to sleep
 Then, little lips, little eyes,
 Little lips that are lovely and wise,
 Little lips that are dreadful and wise !

VI

Clenched little hands like crumpled roses
 Dimpled and dear,
 Feet like flowers that the dawn uncloses,
 What do I fear ?
 Little hands, will you ever be clenched in
 anguish ?
 White little limbs, will you droop and languish ?
 Nay, what do I hear ?

I hear a shouting far away,
 You shall ride on a kingly palm-strewn way
 Some day !

But when you are crowned with a golden crown
 And throne'd on a golden throne,
 You'll forget the manger of Bethlehem town
 And your mother that sits alone
 Wondering whether the mighty king
 Remembers a song she used to sing,

 Long ago,
 ' *Rockaby so,*
Kings may have wonderful jewels to bring,
Mother has only a kiss for her king ! ' . .

Ah, see what a wonderful smile, once more !
 He opens his great dark eyes !
 Little child, little king, nay, hush, it is o'er
 My fear of those deep twin skies,—
 Little child,
 You are all too dreamful and wise !

VII

But now you are mine, all mine,
 And your feet can lie in my hand so small,
 And your tiny hands in my heart can twine,
 And you cannot walk, so you never shall fall,
 Or be pierced by the thorns beside the door,
 Or the nails that lie upon Joseph's floor ;
 Through sun and rain, through shadow and shine
 You are mine, all mine !

CCCVIII

THE DREAM-CHILD'S INVITATION

Once upon a time !—Ah, now the light is burning
 dimly,
 Peterkin is here again · he wants another tale !
 Don't you hear him whispering—*The wind is in*
 the chimley,
The ottoman's a treasure-ship, we'll all set sail ?

All set sail ? No, the wind is very loud to-night :
The darkness on the waters is much deeper
than of yore,

Yet I wonder—hark, he whispers—if the little
streets are still as bright

In old Japan, in old Japan, that happy
haunted shore.

I wonder—hush, he whispers—if perhaps the
world will wake again

When Christmas brings the stories back from
where the skies are blue,

Where clouds are scattering diamonds down on
every cottage window-pane,

And every boy's a fairy prince, and every tale
is true.

There the sword Excalibur is thrust into the
dragon's throat,

Evil there is evil, black is black, and white is
white :

There the child triumphant hurls the villain
spluttering into the moat ,

There the captured princess only waits the
peerless knight.

Fairyland is gleaming there beyond the Sherwood
Forest trees,

There the City of the Clouds has anchored on
the plain

All her misty vistas and slumber-rosy palaces

*(Shall we not, ah, shall we not, wander there
again ?)*

' Happy ever after ' there, the lights of home a
welcome fling

Softly thro' the darkness as the star that
shone of old,

Softly over Bethlehem and o'er the little cradled
King

Whom the sages worshipped with their frank-
incense and gold.

Once upon a time—perhaps a hundred thousand
years ago—

Whisper to me, Peterkin, I have forgotten
when !

Once upon a time there was a way, a way we
used to know

For stealing off at twilight from the weary ways
of men.

Whisper it, O whisper it—the way, the way is
all I need !

All the heart and will are here and all the
deep desire !

Once upon a time—ah, now the light is drawing
near indeed,

I see the fairy faces flush to roses round the
fire.

Once upon a time—the little lips are on my cheek
again,

Little fairy fingers clasped and clinging draw
me nigh,

Dreams, no more than dreams, but they unloose
the weary prisoner's chain

And lead him from his dungeon ! ' What's
a thousand years ? ' they cry.

A thousand years, a thousand years, a little
drifting dream ago,

All of us were hunting with a band of merry
men,

The skies were blue, the boughs were green, the
clouds were crisping isles of snow . . .

. . . So Robin blew his bugle, and the Now
became the Then.

SHANE LESLIE

CCCIX

FLEET STREET

I never see the newsboys run
 Amid the whirling street,
 With swift untiring feet,
 To cry the latest venture done,
 But I expect one day to hear
 Them cry the crack of doom
 And risings from the tomb,
 With great Archangel Michael near ;
 And see them running from the Fleet
 As messengers of God,
 With Heaven's tidings shod
 About their brave unwearied feet

RICHARD MIDDLETON

CCCX

ON A DEAD CHILD

Man proposes, God in His time disposes,
 And so I wander'd up to where you lay,
 A little rose among the little roses,
 And no more dead than they.

It seem'd your childish feet were tired of straying,
 You did not greet me from your flower-
 strewn bed,
 Yet still I knew that you were only playing—
 Playing at being dead.

I might have thought that you were really
 sleeping,
 So quiet lay your eyelids to the sky,
 So still your hair, but surely you were peeping ;
 And so I did not cry.

God knows, and in His proper time disposes,
 And so I smiled and gently called your name,
 Added my rose to your sweet heap of roses,
 And left you to your game.

JOHN MASEFIELD

CCCXI

'IN AS MUCH AS YE HAVE DONE IT'

He who gives a child a treat
 Makes joy-bells ring in Heaven's street,
 And he who gives a child a home
 Builds palaces in Kingdom Come,
 And she who gives a baby birth
 Brings Saviour Christ again to earth ;
 For life is joy, and mind is fruit,
 And body's precious earth and roct.

CICELY FOX SMITH

CCCXII

A WORSHIPPER

Against the oaken pew he leant,
 A child of summers three or four,
 And smiled to see each stained-glass saint
 Cast by the sunshine on the floor.
 He wondered why the folk should look
 So sad and stern on either hand
 His thoughts were wandering from the book,
 The prayers he could not understand.
 Yet, when the organ's thunder filled
 The dim-lit aisles in praise and prayer,
 Sweetly his baby treble trilled
 Happiest of all who worshipped there.
 The sunshine made his heart rejoice ;
 And who shall chide him ? Who declare
 God did not hear the childish voice
 That sang because His world was fair ?

SIDNEY ROYSE LYSAGHT

CCCXIII

FIRST PATHWAYS

Where were the pathways that your childhood
knew ?—

In mountain glens ? or by the ocean strands ?
Or where, beyond the ripening harvest lands,
The distant hills were blue ?

Where evening sunlight threw a golden haze
Over a mellow city's walls and towers ?
Or where the fields and lanes were bright
with flowers,
In quiet woodland ways ?

And whether here or there, or east or west,
That place you dwelt in first was holy ground ,
Its shelter was the kindest you have found,
Its pathways were the best.

And even in the city's smoke and mire
I doubt not that a golden light was shed
On those first paths, and that they also led
To lands of heart's desire

And where the children in dark alleys penn'd
Heard the caged lark sing of the April hills,
Or where they damm'd the muddy gutter rills,
Or made a dog their friend ;

Or where they gathered, dancing hand in hand,
About the organ man, for them, too, lay
Beyond the dismal alley's entrance way
The gates of wonderland

For 'tis my faith that Earth's first words are
sweet
To all her children,—never a rebuff ;
And that we only saw, where ways were rough
The flowers about our feet.

WILLIAM HENRY DAVIES

CCCXIV

ECHO

O happy days of childhood, when
We taught shy Echo in the glen
Words she had never used before—
Ere age lost heart to summon her
Life's river, with its early rush,
Falls into a mysterious hush
When nearing the eternal sea :
Yet we would not forgetful be,
In these deep silent days so wise,
Of shallows making mighty noise,
When we were young, when we were gay,
And never thought Death lived—that day.

CCCXV

THE DREAMING BOY

Sweet are thy dreams, thou happy, careless boy ;
Thou know'st the taste of immortality ,
No weary limbs can rest upon thy heart ,
Sleep has no care to ease thee of at night ;
The same move shuts together eye and mind,
And in the morning one move opens both
Life lies before thee, hardly stepped on yet,
Like a green prairie, fresh, and full of flowers.
Life lies before thee for experiment,
Until old age comes, whose sad eyes can trace
A better path he missed, with fairer flowers,
Which other men have walked in misery.
Thou hast no knowledge of a life of toil,
How hard Necessity destroys our dreams,
And castles in the air must pay him tithes
So heavy that no tenant keeps them long
To thee the world is still unknown and strange
Still full of wild romance, as in those days
Ere England launched her forests on the sea.

Thou wilt discover in far mountain caves
 Deserted, lamps left burning for thy feet,
 And comfort in them more than kings are worth.
 Aye, many a gate will open at thy call,
 And wise men will come forth to welcome thee,
 And bells will ring for pleasure in thy ear
 Great monsters in dark woods, with mighty
 mouths,

That swallow their own faces when they yawn,
 And mountain bears that carry on their backs
 Rough, shaggy coats whose price compares with
 silk—

Will fall by thy strong, right, all-conquering arm
 And who can stop thee, who can turn thee back?
 Not giants, though they stand full twenty feet,
 And sit too tall for common men to stand
 Oh, that sweet magic in thee, happy boy!
 It makes a golden world for all things young
 Thou with an iron ring, a piece of bone,
 A rusty blade, or half a yard of rope,
 Art richer than a man with mines and ships
 The child's fresh mind makes honey out of soot,
 Sweeter than Age can make on banks of flowers,
 He needs but cross a bridge, that happy boy,
 And he can breathe the air of a new world
 Sweet children, with your trust in this hard life—
 Like little birds that ope their mouths for food
 From hands that come to cage them till they die.

CCCXVI

THE HAPPY CHILD

I saw this day sweet flowers grow thick—
 But not one like the child did pick.

I heard the packhounds in green park—
 But no dog like the child heard bark.

I heard this day bird after bird—
 But not one like the child has heard.

A hundred butterflies saw I—
But not one like the child saw fly.
I saw the horses roll in grass—
But no horse like the child saw pass.
My world this day has lovely been—
But not like what the child has seen.

JOHN FREEMAN

CCCXVII

CHILDHOOD CALLS

Come over, come over the deepening river,
Come over again the dark torrent of years,
Come over, come back where the green leaves
quiver,
And the lilac still blooms and the grey sky clears.
Come, come back to the everlasting garden,
To that green heaven, and the blue heaven above.
Come back to the time when time brought no
burden,
And love was unconscious, knowing not love

CCCXVIII

THE KITE

It was a day
All blue and lifting white,
When I went into the fields with Frank
To fly his kite.

The fields were aged, bare,
Shut between houses everywhere.
All the way there
The wind tugged at the kite to take it
Untethered, toss and break it ;
But Frank held fast, and I
Walked with him admiringly ;
In his light brave and fine
How bright was mine !

We tailed the kite
 While the wind flapped its purple face
 And yellow head
 Frank's yellow head
 Was scarcely higher, and not so bright.
 'Let go!' he cried, and I let go
 And watched the kite
 Swaying and rising so
 That I was rooted to the place,
 Watching the kite
 Rise into the blue,
 Lifting its head against the white,
 Against the sun,
 Against the height
 That far-off, farther drew;
 Shivering there
 In that fine air
 As we below shivered with delight
 And fear.

There it floated
 Among the birds and clouds at ease
 Of others all unnoted,
 Swimming above the ranked stiff trees
 And I lay down, looking up at the sky,
 The clouds and birds that floated
 By others still unnoted,
 And that swaying kite
 Specking the light:
 Looking up at the sky,
 The birds and clouds that drew
 Nearer, leaving the blue,
 Stooping, and then brushing me,
 With such tenderness touching me
 That I had still lain there
 In those fields bare,
 Forgetting the kite;
 For every cloud was now a kite
 Streaming with light.

PATRICK R. CHALMERS

CCCXIX

' TREASURE ISLAND '

A lover breeze to the roses pleaded,
 Failed and faltered, took heart and advanced ;
 Up over the peaches, unimpeded,
 A great Red Admiral ducked and danced ;
 But the boy with the book saw not, nor heeded,
 Reading entranced—entranced !

He read, nor knew that the fat bees bumbled ;
 He woke no whit to the tea-bell's touch,
 The brownny pigeons that wheeled and tumbled
 (For how should a pirate reck of such ?)
 He read, and the flaming flower-beds crumbled,
 At tap of the sea-cook's crutch !

And lo, there leapt for him dolphins running
 The peacock seas of the buccaneer,
 Long, savage reefs where the seals lay sunning,
 The curve of canvas, the creak of gear ,
 For ever the Master's wondrous cunning
 Lent him of wizard lear !

But lost are the garden days of leisure,
 Lost with their wide-eyed ten-year-old,
 Yet if you'd move to a by-gone measure,
 Or shape your heart to an ancient mould,
 Maroons and schooners and buried treasure
 Wrought on a page of gold—

Then take the book in the dingy binding,
 Still the shadows come, bearded, great,
 And swaggering files of sea-thieves winding
 Back, with their ruffling cut-throat gait,
 Reclaim an hour when we first went finding
 Pieces of Eight—o' Eight.

MARION ST JOHN ADCOCK

CCCXX

THE REASON

When I was naughty an' sent up to bed,
 And wouldn't go up—I was growing, I said,
 Too *big* to be sent—Mother jus' shook her head ;
 It's cur'ous, she didn't believe that I was,
 And didn't do like what I thought she would,
 'cos

She sent me upstairs to bed.

When I was naughty an' sent up to bed,
 And somehow I cried on the stairway an' said
 I was only jus' *little*, then Mother, instead,
 Came suddenly to me with arms open wide ,
 Her eys were all shiny , ' Jus' little,' she cried,
 An' carried me down from bed.

ROSE FYLEMAN

CCCXXI

MRS BROWN

As soon as I'm in bed at night
 And snugly settled down,
 The little girl I am by day
 Goes very suddenly away,
 And then I'm Mrs Brown.

I have a family of six,
 And all of them have names,
 The girls are Joyce and Nancy Maud
 The boys are Marmaduke and Claude
 And Percival and James.

We have a house with twenty rooms
 A mile away from town ;
 I think it's good for girls and boys
 To be allowed to make a noise—
 And so does Mr Brown.

We do the most exciting things,
 Enough to make you creep ;
 And on and on and on we go—
 I sometimes wonder if I know
 When I have gone to sleep.

HELEN PARRY EDEN

CCCXXII

THE BABY GOAT

Four alders guard a bridge of planks
 And waveless waters filmed with brown,
 A rugged lawn's uneven banks
 Slope gently down,
 And there, still chafing at the chain
 That girds his slim pathetic throat,
 They've picketed our friend again—
 The Baby Goat.

Treading alone the watered vale,
 Betsey and I, beside the marsh
 Often we linger to bewail
 His durance harsh ,
 What plants allure my baby's feet,
 What tethered struggles claim her sighs,
 What shrill protestant whinnies greet
 Her long good-byes.

Once we repassed the lonely ground
 Below the alders where he feeds
 And spied his stunted horns girt round
 With flow'ring weeds,
 Two merry wenches and a child
 Caressed his grey ill-fitting coat
 And, lolling in the sedge, beguiled
 The Baby Goat.

Now, for long days companionless,
 His soft blunt nose, his agate eyes,
 His raised remonstrant brows express
 The sad surprise

Wherewith the desolate green waste
 O'erloads his heart who at the edge
 Of stagnant waters kneels to taste
 The thankless sedge.

His Mother is his chiefest lack
 Who in some heathy upland place
 Tidied his sturdy socks of black
 And licked his face ;
 He turns to see us saunter by
 The level highway hand-in-hand—
 I think the Baby Goat knows why
 We understand

CCCXXIII

THE PETALS

Yourself in bed
 (My lovely Drowsy-head)
 Your garments lie like petals shed
 Upon the floor
 Whose carpet is strewn o'er
 With little things that late you wore.

For the morrow's wear
 I fold them neat and fair
 And lay them on the nursery chair ;

And round them lie
 Airs of the hours that die
 With all their stored-up fragrancv.

As a flower might
 Give out to the cool night
 The warmth it drank in day-long light,

So cool and lawn
 From your soft skin withdrawn
 (Whereon they were assumed at dawn)

Breathe the spent mood,
 Lost act and attitude,
 Of the small sweetness they endued,

Ere all turn cold
No garment that I hold
But shakes a vision from 'ts fold
Of little feet
That vainly would be fleet,
Tangled about with meadow-sweet,
And of bent knees
When Betsey kneeling sees,
In the parched hedgerow, strawberries.
Such things I see
Folding your clothes, which be
Weeds of the dead day's comedy.
The while I pray
Your part may be alway
So simple and so good to play,
And do desire
Your life may still respire
Such sweetness as your cast attire

CCCXXIV

THE BELGIAN PINAFORE

'Twas bought in Bruges, the shop was poor,
One read 'Au Bébé' flourished o'er
The ancient lintel, to that door
No English guinea
Had ever come nor travelled gold
Gladdened her gaze, that woman old,
Who tottered from the gloom and sold
The Belgian 'pinny.'

I mind me choosing in the place
A cap with frills of little lace;
'That too,' I said, 'shall come to grace
My Small and Sweet'
Prim in her pinafore arrayed
I pictured Betsey while I strayed
Where, all the time, the proud bells played
Above the street.

Now, Betsey, on the roguish back
 That stalks around the sunny stack
 The turkey's tricolour or the track
 Of stable cats
 The Belgian 'pinny' flaunts its hue,
 Still the same stripe of white and blue
 As when 'twas dyed, no doubt for you,
 In Flemish vats

Still of its old lost life it tells
 And alicia provenance, there are spells
 And glamour of the Town of Bells
 About it shed ;
 And when my Belgian Betsey climbs
 My knee I've heard a hundred times
 The clash and ripple of the chimes
 Around her head,

As though the child herself did play
 Without some white estaminet
 Shuttered and silent where, all day
 In sun and shower,
 Two little lions with stone grins
 Hold 'scutcheons under paws and chins
 And their divine appellat dîns
 The honoured hour

MADELEINE NIGHTINGALE

CCCXXV

DEDICATION

(Of 'Nursery Lays of Nursery Days')

For you who can never be lost or dead,
 Baby o' mine, Baby o' mine,
 I sing of the old red window-seat,
 I sing of the friends of the friendly street,
 I sing of the tramp of their passing feet
 And the things that the sound of them said.

For, surely, wherever you are to-day,
Baby o' mine, Baby o' mine,
Though you sail your ship on t'he crystal sea,
Though you ride on the wind's back, wild and
free,
Though you find the fairies, you'll sometimes be
A little bit tired of play.

You'll tire, though you romp in the farthest sky,
Baby o' mine, Baby o' mine,
Who should know you and I not know,
You who are mine from the long ago,
Mine till the rivers shall cease to flow
And the ocean of time run dry ?

You'll tire and you'll call me creation through,
Baby o' mine, Baby o' mine,
From the hills where the lights of Someday gleam,
Over the spaces that only seem,
And down in the depths of the deepest dream
You'll ask me to sing to you

And I'll sing, whilst I hold you upon my knee,
Baby o' mine, Baby o' mine,
Things you'd have heard in the Might Have Been,
Things you'd have thought and loved and seen,
I've written them out all fair and clean,
I'll sing them for you and me

FRANCES CHESTERTON

CCCXXVI

TO FELICITY WHO CALLS ME MARY

You go singing through my garden on little
dancing feet,
Crying ' Mary, Mary, Mary,' with laughter shrill
and sweet ;
And the lily bud grows paler and the passion
flower flames,
As light upon the wandering breeze you toss the
name of names.

ON INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD 323

When I was but a tiny child, they chose for me
a saint,
Fulfilled of Christian charity and heavenly
restraint,
But you have called me Mary, and oh ! I joy
to hear
The name of God's own Mother come so gaily
on the air.

What though my arms be empty, and hers for
ever press
The Eternal Child who touches you with such
divine caress,
Here's another love, Felicity, and oh, sweetheart,
dunk deep,
That you may laugh more easily, and I forget
to weep

For you have called me Mary, making bitter
waters sweet,
Oh little soul of happiness, oh little dancing feet ;
And I grow bold in honour, that all my spirit
shames,
As light upon the wandering breeze you toss the
name of names

HUGH MACNAGHTEN

CCCXXVII

IDYLL

In Switzerland one idle day,
As on the grass at noon we lay,
Came a grave peasant child and stood
Watching the strangers eat their food.
And what we offered her she took
In silence, with her quiet look,
And when we rose to go, content
Without a word of thanks she went

Another day in sleet and rain
 I chose the meadow path again,
 And partly turning chanced to see
 My little guest-friend watching me
 With eyes half hidden by her hair,
 Blowing me kisses, unaware
 That I had seen, and still she wore
 The same grave aspect as before

And some recall for heart's delight
 A sunrise, some a snowy height,
 And I a little child who stands
 And gravely kisses both her hands

HENRY ALLSOPP

CCCXXVIII

THE BLUE OF HEAVEN

We wandered through the wooded vales
 A fairy child and I,
 And when she asked me where was Heaven,
 I said, ' In yonder sky '

' Ah, yes ! the sky is blue,' she said,
 ' And looks so still and pure ,
 And see ! this violet is blue
 It came from heaven for sure '

I answered, ' Yes, it came from Heaven ' ,
 And tenderly she knelt
 To kiss the floweret's lips, that clung
 To hers as though they felt

She saw a swallow sweep along,
 And ' That is blue,' she said,
 ' And came from Heaven ' , and wished the bird
 Had not so swiftly fled.

And then we caught a glimpse through trees
 Of ocean blue and clear,
 A part of Heaven—and O, how large !
 How good that it was near !

' Why, surely there must be,' she said
 ' As much on earth as *there*
 The flower, the bird, the ocean too,
 Are blue and just as fair.'

I answered, ' Yes,' and hoped for her
 That Earth had much of Heaven,
 And blessed the simple faith of this
 Sweet goldyllocks of seven

A streamlet crept among the ferns
 ('Twas scarce a step across),
 And there she bent and softly stroked
 The creeping, silken moss

The pool revealed her floweret face :
 She saw her eyes were blue ;
 And soon in wistful wonder asked
 ' My eyes—are *they* Heaven too ?'

She stole to me, and when I said,
 ' Yes, all things pure and fair,'
 She took my hand and looked at me
 Through strays of golden hair

' And yours are blue,' she softly said,
 ' So blue , and I am glad '
 But I could only kiss her lips,
 And hide that I was sad

JOHN LE GAY BRERETON

CCCXXIX

INCARNATION

Our little queen of dreams,
 Our image of delight,
 Which whitens east and gleams
 And beckens from the height,
 Takes on her human form—is here in mortal sight.

We two have loved her long,
Have known her eyes for years ;
We worshipped her with song
The spirit only hears,
And now she comes to us new-washed with blood
and tears

Her radiant self she veils
With vesture meet for earth,
And, knowing all, inhales
The lethal air of birth,
And wakes to restless dreams of misery and
mirth.

What gift is ours to give,
What truth is ours to teach
That she may learn to live
With joy within her reach ?
We can but let her learn the sound of human
speech. . .

Her kinship she will know
With beast and rock and tree,
Wherever she may go
The sky her home will be,
The winds will be her mates, her crooning nurse
the sea.

SHAW NEILSON

CCCXXX

THE LAND WHERE I WAS BORN

Have you ever been down to my countree
Where the trees are green and tall ?
The days are long and the heavens are high,
But the people there are small.
There is no work there ; it is always play ;
The sun is sweet in the morn ;
But a thousand dark things walk at right
In the land where I was born.

Have you ever been down to my countree
 Where the birds made happy spring ?
 The parrots screamed from the honey-trees,
 And the jays hopped chattering
 Strange were the ways of the water-birds
 In the brown swamps, night and morn ;
 I knew the roads they had in the reeds
 In the land where I was born.

Have you ever been down to my countree ?
 Have you ridden the horses there ?
 They had silver manes, and we made them
 prance
 And plunge and gallop and rear
 We were knights of the olden time,
 When the old chain-mail was worn :
 The swords would flash and the helmets
 crash
 In the land where I was born

Have you ever been down to my countree ?
 It was full of smiling queens .
 They had flaxen hair, they were white and
 fair,
 But they never reached their teens
 Their shoes were small and their dreams were
 tall
 Wonderful frocks were worn ;
 But the queens all strayed from the place we
 played,
 In the land where I was born

I know you have been to my countree
 Though I never saw you there ;
 I know you have loved all things I have
 loved,
 Flowery, sweet and fair
 The days were long,—it was always play ;
 But we,—we were tired and worn ;
 They could not welcome us back again
 To the land where I was born.

SHAKESPEARE

CCCXXXI

ENVOY

Our revels now are ended These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air ·
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

NOTES
INDEX OF AUTHORS
AND
INDEX OF FIRST LINES

NOTES

PAGE NO

- | | | |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | 1 | These lines breathe the very spirit of piety and the perfection of motherhood. Swinburne said of them 'unspeakable in their loveliness they seem to my poor judgment' |
| 2 | 2 | I have found it beyond my powers to modernise the spelling in this tender little poem. It is one of the lyrics in <i>The Garland of Laurel</i> , which Skelton wrote for his patroness the Countess of Surrey, mother of Henry Howard the poet, about 1520. <i>Nepte</i> is a kind of calamint. <i>reloff</i> = gillyflower: <i>enuwd</i> = enewed <i>sterre</i> = star <i>morow</i> = morning. <i>make you sure</i> = assure you |
| 3 | 3 | A contribution of Edwardes' own to <i>The Paradise of Dainty Devices</i> , a popular Elizabethan anthology of which he was the collector. |
| — | 4 | From the <i>Shepherd's Calendar</i> —December |
| 4 | 5 | <i>Faerie Queene</i> , I. XII. vii. |
| 5 | 7 | Known as <i>The Coventry Carol</i> . It is the second of three songs belonging to the Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors' Company in Coventry, the subject of which was the Birth of Christ and Offering of the Magi, with the Flight into Egypt and Murder of the Innocents. The first and third of the songs, telling of the shining of the Star and the coming of the Herald Angels, were sung by the Shepherds, the second (<i>Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child</i>) was sung by the Women, the mothers of the Innocents. Cf. Sharp's <i>Pageants or Dramatic Mysteries anciently performed at Coventry</i> . Coventry: MDCCCXXV |
| 0 | 9 | Robert Southwell was trained at Douai and Paris, and entered the Society of Jesus in 1578. He was thirteen times tortured on the rack by the Government of Elizabeth and put to death in 1595. This beautiful and fervent poem—a special favourite of Ben Jonson's—was probably written during his imprisonment. |
| 7 | 10 | <i>Winter's Tale</i> , i. 2 |
| 8 | 11 | <i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i> , iii. 2, and <i>As You Like It</i> , i. 3. |

PAGE NO.

- 8 12 *King John*, iii. 4
- 10 13 *King Richard III.* iv 3
- 12 16 The third of the seven sonnets called *La Corona*, each of which (after the first) begins with the last line of the preceding sonnet.
- 17 These lines are the epitaph in Hawsted Church in Suffolk of Dorothy Drury, daughter of Sir Robert Drury and niece of Francis Bacon. They have always been attributed to Donne, who wrote a Funeral Elegy upon her sister Elizabeth Drury, who died aged fifteen.
- 13 18 From *A Pindaric Ode, to the immortal memory and friendship of that noble pair, Sir Lucius Cary and Sir H. Morison*. Ben Jonson had unusual sympathy with children. His little known elegy *Eupheme* or *The Faire Fame, left to posteritie of that truly-noble Lady, the Lady Venetia Digby, late wife of Sir Kenelme Digby, Knight a gentleman absolute in all numbers*, which consists of 'ten pieces,' begins with the dedication of her cradle. I quote two stanzas from it:
- For, though that rattles, timbrels, toyes,
Take little infants with their noyse,
As prop'rest gifts to girles and boyes,
Of light expense;
Their corrals, whistles, and prime coates,
Their painted maskes, their paper boates,
With sayles of silke, as the first notes
Surprise their sense.
- 14 21 The rich humanity and breadth of outlook which distinguished Richard Corbet, Bishop of Oxford and then of Norwich, are well displayed in this little poem. Another of Corbet's poems is *Farewell rewards and faeries*.
- 15 23 These two sonnets are from a little group of scriptural poems, *Floures of Sion*. Drummond is not the only Elizabethan who owed much to Italian example, but he developed a form of his own out of the technique he inherited; his technical perfection is second only to that of Shakespeare, Sidney and Spenser, and his calm and spiritual exaltation are his own. If his friend Ben Jonson thought his poems 'smelled too much of the schooles,' to Charles Lamb his name carried 'a perfume in the mention,' and had 'a finer relish' (Lamb confessed) 'than that of Milton or of Shakespeare,' and Palgrave has placed his fine ode *Phoebus, arise!* at the very threshold of the original Golden Treasury.
- 16 24 George Wither fought on both sides during the Civil War, and though he was made a Major-

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- General by Cromwell, he earned by his inconstancy the contempt and reproach of Dryden and lesser partisans of the Restoration. He was 'discovered' by Charles Lamb, and highly praised by Swinburne. Prof. Saintsbury says of him, 'if genuine pastoral sweetness—the sense of the country and of country joys—is anywhere in English poetry, it is in Wither, who has much besides'.
- 20 27 Handsell = New Year's gift, or earnest-money in token of a new beginning. There is a peculiar delicacy in Herrick's child poems, and attention is here drawn to his *Christmas Carol, sung to the King in the Presence at White-Hall*, which contains the exquisite line
- The Darling of the World is come
- 21 29 *Paddocks* = frogs
- 22 33 *Behither* *all*, *behither* is a preposition, meaning 'short of,' 'barring,' 'save'. The original and earlier use of the word was of space, 'on this side of'.
- 23 34 Daughter of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham
- 24 37 Strode was chaplain to Richard Corbet, Bishop of Oxford—whose lines to his son Vincent appear in this volume. Strode's poems were collected from anthologies and manuscripts, and published by Bertram Dobell in 1907. Little Mistress Mary Prideaux was a daughter of Dr. John Prideaux, Rector of Exeter College, Oxford, and Bishop of Worcester. There is an elegy by William Browne on another daughter, Anne, who died at the age of six.
- 26 38 This exquisitely simple poem was reprinted from Emily Taylor's *Flowers and Fruits from Old English Gardens* in the first edition of Beeching's *Lyra Sacra*, but omitted from the second. It is clearly the work of a scholar. 'Nevermore' was probably one word—as here printed. Protests used to be made against 'evermore' as an Americanism. But some so-called Americanisms are in truth English expressions, which were taken westwards in the seventeenth century.
- 27 39 These touching lines are taken from a brass in the chancel of Reigate Parish Church. The inscription above them is as follows:
- 'Here lyeth interred the body of Anne Worly, the daughter of William Worly, Esq., and of Alice his wife, who departed this life the 3d day of September Anno 1653 being about the age of 8 yeares.'

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- 29 42 I have omitted the second, th'rd and fourth stanzas, which seem rather overweighted with classical conceits
- 31 43 This beautiful hymn seems to me to be superior even to Milton's, perhaps because of its tenderness
- 33 44 It may be of interest to contrast the simplicity and directness of these lines with Crashaw's poem upon the birth of Princess Elizabeth daughter of King Charles I.

Rich, liberal Heaven, what, hath your treasure
store

Of such bright angels, that you give us more ?
Witness this map of beauty , every part
Of which doth show the quintessence of art.
See ! nothing's vulgar, every atom here
Speaks the great wisdom of th' Artificer
Poor earth hath not enough perfection,
To shadow forth th' admirèd paragon
Those sparkling twins of light should I now
style

Rich diamonds, set in a pure silver foil ;
Or call her cheek a bed of new-blown roses ;
And say that ivory her front composes ,
Or should I say, that with a scarlet wave
Those plump soft rubies had been dressed so
brave ;

Or that the dying lily did bestow
Upon her neck the whitest of his snow ;
Or that the purple violets did lace
That hand of milky down ' all these are base ;
Her glories I should dim with things so gross,
And foul the clear text with a muddy gloss

- 35 45 Marvell, friend of Milton, tutor to Fairfax' daughter, secretary to the embassy at Constantinople, became Member for his native city of Hull just before the Restoration. He was like Milton in that his sweetness and intense love of beauty differentiated him from the bulk of the Puritans. This poem is a good example of his wit and delicacy, and also shows that he possessed that rare mystical feeling for flowers which, in *The Nymph complaining for 'the death of her fawn*, he displays for animals
- 37 46 These poems of the poet-physician Vaughan should be compared with Thomas Traherne's, and with Wordsworth's great ode. A copy of *Silex Scintillans* was in Wordsworth's library. Vaughan is the first of our poets to reveal the unseen and the eternal in childhood.
- 38 47 ' Those white designs which children drive ' : the

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very vowel sounds of this splendid line enhance the sense of purity and brightness, as they do in the words 'And kings to the brightness of thy rising.' A similar effect is achieved, less forcibly, in the two opening lines of the preceding poem, *The Retreat*.

' he
' Must live twice that would God's face see '
cf St John iii 3

39 49 These charmingly playful lines are from *Britannia Rediviva* The 'venerable infant' was destined to become the Old Pretender

40 50 This poem, together with one *Upon Young Mr Rogers of Gloucestershire*, was first published in 1704, after Dryden's death. Its history is unknown, but probably its subject is the same 'Young Mr. Rogers,' thought to be a member of the old family of Rogers of Dowdeswell, near Cheltenham. In the shorter poem Dryden says of him that he was 'his parent's only treasure,' and that 'More moderate gifts might have prolonged his date'

42 52 Thomas Traherne is one of the corner-stones of our poetry on Infancy and Childhood His attitude towards childhood is extraordinarily modern, and resembles that of his fellow-mystic Blake and of Wordsworth. Perhaps his *Centuries of Meditations* are even more remarkable than his poems I quote from them the prose version of *Wonder* :

' All appeared new, and strange at first, inexpressibly rare and delightful and beautiful .
My knowledge was Divine My very ignorance was advantageous. I seemed as one brought into the Estate of Innocence All things were spotless and pure and glorious yea, and infinitely mine, and joyful and precious I knew not that there were any sins, or complaints or laws I dreamed not of poverties, contentions or vices All tears and quarrels were hidden from mine eyes Everything was at rest, free and immortal I knew nothing of sickness or death or rents or exaction, either for tribute or bread All Time was Eternity, and a perpetual Sabbath. Is it not strange, that an infant should be heir of the whole World, and see those mysteries which the books of the learned never unfold ?

' The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were

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- as precious as gold · the gates were at first the end of the world . . . The Men! O what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged seem! Immortal Cherubims! And young men glittering and sparkling Angels, and maids strange scaphic pieces of life and beauty! Boys and girls tumbling in the street, and playing, were moving jewels I knew not that they were born or should die; but all things abided eternally as they were in their proper places . . . The skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the World was mine, and I the only spectator and enjoyer of it I knew no churlish proprieties, nor bounds, nor divisions: but all proprieties and divisions were mine all treasures and the possessors of them' (*Centuries of Meditations*: Third Century, 2 and 3)
- Traherne was the son of a shoemaker of Hereford, and was educated at Brasenose College, Oxford. He was for seven years chaplain to Sir O Bridgman, Lord Keeper under the Cabal The romance of the discovery of his MS 'n 1896-7 is told in Bertram Dobell's Introduction to Traherne's *Poetical Works* To Dobell's executors acknowledgment is here made for the text used
- 46 55 It is worth while to contrast the first four lines of this poem with Mrs Meynell's *The Shepherdess* (No 288) and to note the change that has taken place in our way of regarding childhood
- 47 56 John Norris held the parsonage of Bemerton, near Salisbury, which had formerly been George Herbert's His poems passed through ten editions between 1684 and 1730
- 49 58 The distance traversed since Ambrose Phillips, friend of Addison, wrote, is seen from the fact that Phillips was dubbed 'Namby-Pamby' by Henry Carey, the dramatist, for writing of children. Carey has thus done a disservice to the language which is hardly requited by his fine song *Sally in our Alley*
- 51 60 Palgrave wrote of this poem · 'The admirable author of this hymn almost apologised for publishing it Yet few child-pictures have been drawn in words or colours of more perfect tenderness'
- 52 61 This beautiful hymn was composed at Byrom's home by Manchester in 1745 as a Christmas carol for his little daughter Dolly—'for her, and for no one else' The version in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* is abridged to 36 lines
- 54 63 Whitehead became Poet Laureate, in succession to Colly Cibber, on Gray refusing the appointment.

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- 55 64 I have omitted lines 55-94—the formidable catalogue of 'The Ministers of human fate'
- 57 65 Written in 1758 at the request of Dr Thomas Wharton, Gray's old schoolfellow and lifelong friend, upon his then only son, who died in infancy. Later Gray had affectionate pet-names for Wharton's other children
- 66 The most poignantly direct and moving of all Cowper's poems. Lines 21-87 of the poem are printed here. The beautiful simile, which occurs almost unnoticed in *The Progress of Error*,
'Patient of contradiction as a child,'
is of itself sufficient to prove Cowper's sympathy with childhood
- 59 67 From *Tirocinium* or a Review of Schools lines 131-150
- 60 68 *Ibid* lines 296-313. The irony of these lines occurring in a poem written to commend private tuition at home has often been noticed
- 69 From *Infancy—a Fragment* in Vol IV of the eight-volume edition of Crabbe's works. Crabbe tells the story of his own boyhood in *Tales of the Hall*, Book IV—lines specially beloved by Cardinal Newman
- 61 70 Blake reaches the note sounded by Traherne and goes beyond it. His lyrics have in them an almost unearthly music, and to him we owe some of the finest metaphors in the language (e.g. Tiger, tiger burning bright). Swinburne called Blake's *Auguries of Innocence* 'a series of such divine epigrams as Angels might be imagined to dictate, by way of a lesson for repetition, to little children'. That his poems were not better known in his lifetime was due in part to his method of publication. His artist soul would not permit them to be printed at all. They were engraved upon copper plates by himself and his wife—a long and laborious process—and copies were struck off as required. Of the *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*, his best-known works, from which these poems are taken, hardly more than twenty copies are known to exist.
- 68 79 From *The Cotter's Saturday Night*. *Stecher* = stagger. *flüchterin* = fluttering. *ingle* = fire or fireplace
- 80 From *The Pleasures of Memory*, 1792. Rogers' work is polished and fastidious rather than inspired. He was nine years in writing the *Pleasures of Memory*. He was acquainted with every illustrious Englishman for half a century, and was a generous patron of artists and authors.

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- 70 82 The opening lines of *Good Tidings or, News from the Farm*—a poem written to celebrate Edward Jenner's discovery of vaccination as a safeguard against small-pox
- 72 84 Wordsworth is the Laureate of Childhood as he is, and, it may be, because he is, the poet of Nature. For there is a connection. He not only felt the beauty of nature, but felt that nature reveals truths beyond man's vision—as a glass through which may be caught vistas of the unseen. Man's attitude to nature was therefore a matter of vital moment. Children see nature aright. Hence the importance of childhood. The child is father to the man, and the childish attitude must be recovered—its trustful acceptance, its pure emotion, its imagination, its unconsciousness and its joy. Wordsworth laid down no rule of life, that is no part of the poet's function. But he certainly felt he had a message for mankind, as is proved by his firm refusal to alter either his style or his message during all those years when his work was not only neglected but ridiculed. It seems incredible to-day that, in his fiftieth year, the whole of his returns from 'the writing trade' had not amounted to seven score pounds and very sad that his sister could write of him, in inviting at his request a friend's criticism, 'Do not fear to give him pain. He is far too much accustomed to be abused to receive pain from it (at least as far as he himself is concerned)' His own attitude was one of dignified acceptance. He neither made any rejoinder nor altered his ways. 'Trouble not yourself,' he wrote to another friend in 1807, 'upon their present reception. Of what moment is that with what, I trust, is their destiny?'—to console the afflicted, to add sunshine to daylight, by making the happy happier, to teach the young and gracious of every age to see, to think, and feel, and, therefore, to become more actively and securely virtuous.' Allusions to Wordsworth's children occur frequently in his poetry. Not only of *Michael* but of himself it was true that

'a child, more than all other gifts,
Brings hope with it, and forward looking
thoughts,
And stirrings of inquietude'

Dora is the infant in *The Kitten and the Falling Leaves* (No. 89). *Loving she is, and tractable, though wild* is a picture of Catherine. The sonnet *Surprised by joy, in patient as the wind* (No. 95) was

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- inspired by her memory. She and her brother Thomas died in 1812. Wordsworth's grief remained with him through life. His friend Aubrey de Vere relates, 'Referring once to two young children of his who had died about *forty years* previously, he described the details of their illnesses with an exactness and impetuosity of troubled excitement, such as might have been expected if the bereavement had taken place but a few weeks before.' After their death he found it absolutely necessary to move away from the Parsonage of Grasmere, which stands close by the churchyard, if he was to recover 'that tranquillity which it is our duty to aim at'—and so it was that, in the spring of 1813, the Wordsworths settled at Rydal Mount.
- 72 85 Written at Goslar in 1798. 'It was founded on a circumstance told me by my sister, of a little girl who, not far from Halifax, in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snowstorm. Her footsteps were tracked by her parents to the middle of the lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body, however, was found in the canal.'
- 74 86 Wordsworth met the child who is the heroine of this poem in 1793 within the area of Goodrich Castle on the Wye. In 1841 he revisited the place, but was unable to find in the neighbouring hamlet any trace of his little friend. The poem was written in 1798. Wordsworth relates that he composed it walking to and fro in the grove at Alfoxden—the last stanza first, having begun with the last line.
- 76 87 These lines show prophetic insight into the character of Hartley Coleridge, who did, through life, preserve 'A young lamb's heart amid the full-grown flocks'. The next year Samuel Taylor Coleridge, writing to his friend Mr Thomas Poole, unconsciously quoted from them. 'Hartley is a strange, strange boy, exquisitely wild, an utter visionary; like the moon among thin clouds, he moves in a circle of light of his own making.' John Brown, author of *Rab and his Friends*, quotes part of the poem in his little essay 'Queen Mary's Child-Garden' in *Horæ Subsecræ*.
- 77 88 *Excursion*, iv 1132.
- 78 89 See note on No. 84 above.
- 79 90 These lines are repeated, with a few changes of words and punctuation, in the Fifth Book of *The Prelude*.
- 80 91 *Excursion*, viii 302.
- 83 94 One of Wordsworth's clearest recollections of his

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- mother, who died when he was eight, was of her
'pinning a nosegay to his breast when he was
going to say the catechism in the church, as was
customary before Easter'
- 83 95 See note on No 84 above
- 86 97 From *The Prelude, Book I* *The Prelude* was
planned at Goslar in 1798 and finished in 1805,
though it was not published till after Words-
worth's death. It is dedicated to Coleridge.
Wordsworth's early childhood was spent between
Cockermouth and Penrith till at the age of eight
he went to school at Hawkshead. The scenes of
these incidents can therefore easily be traced.
It was rowing out upon Esthwaite that he beheld
the terrifying peak of Wetherlam. Esthwaite
Water was also the scene of the skating. 'One
summer evening (led by her)' *her* = Nature
- 90 98 Nothing equal in inspiration to this great Ode
had appeared in English poetry since *Lycidas*
was published in 1637
- 95 — 1 19 *Hence in a season of calm weather*
Wordsworth was to recover this mood once more
in his majestic *Evening Ode*—the ode inspired
by a sunset of extraordinary splendour and
beauty in 1818
- Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light
Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored,
Which, at this moment, on my waking sight
Appears to shine, by miracle restored!
My soul, though yet confined to earth,
Rejoices in a second birth,
—'Tis past, the visionary splendour fades;
And night approaches with her shades
- 97 101 From the Introduction to the First Canto of
Marmion. The Introduction to Canto Third
gives many autobiographical details of Scott's
own childhood
- 98 102 From *Christabel*. Coleridge's best poetical work
was done before the end of 1800, when the second
part of *Christabel* was written. The dates of the
poems here printed are 1800, 1797, 1829, 1798,
(?) 1815, 1799. As we know from his school-
fellow Charles Lamb, Coleridge was a remarkably
precocious boy, but it is difficult to believe his
own words about himself as a child. 'Alas!
I had all the simplicity, all the docility of the
little child, but none of the child's habits. I
never thought as a child—never had the language
of a child'
- 104 109 The author of *Dream Children* holds a place in

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- the Temple of Childhood higher even than that to which the merit of these poems entitles him
- 106 112 Landor's elegance, colour, romantic suggestion, and gift for achieving statuesque effects are well seen in these lovely little poems. Ianthe was Sophia Jane Swift, a friend of his early days in Wales. He saw her again more than forty years later as the Countess de Molandé at Bath, where she was staying with her grandchildren. She died in 1851. Few names have been more musically sung.
- 108 116 Landor's volcanic temperament is seen at its best in his relations with his children, of whom he was passionately fond. He was almost beside himself during a visit to Naples when he learned that they were ill, and in their games *Babbo* was always their most gleeful playmate.
- 111 119 The poem *On getting home the Picture of a Little Girl Six Years Old*, of which these are the concluding lines, was inspired by a picture by Eugenio Latilla in a shop window which Campbell passed morning after morning on his way from Lincoln's Inn Fields to the Literary Union, until finally he could resist buying it no longer.
- 112 122 Peacock—for forty years Chief Examiner of Indian Correspondence under the East Indian Company—was the author of several novels in which many of his best verses occur. His collected works were published in 1875 with a preface by Lord Houghton. Another of his poems which touches the spirit of childhood very tenderly is
- I play'd with you 'mid cowslips blowing
When I was six and you were four
- 113 123 John Wilson was Professor of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh. For a time he owned the estate of Elleray on Windermere, and was intimate with Wordsworth. He was an eloquent critic, his best papers being collected in 1842 and published under the title of *The Recreations of Christopher North*.
- 114 124 Sir Aubrey de Vere Hunt (which name he dropped in 1832) was born at Curragh Chase, County Limerick. He was at Harrow with Byron, Sir Robert Peel and B. W. Procter. This sonnet is from *A Song of Faith and other Poems*, which was dedicated to Wordsworth.
- 125 B. W. Procter—better known as Barry Cornwall—addressed these lines to his daughter Adelaide Anne Procter, who had more than her father's gifts as a poet. If Procter was one who

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had 'the accomplishment of song' rather than a poet, Swinburne, who entered the circle of his friends, was able to write thus of him at the end of his long life.

Time takes them home that we loved, fair
names and famous,
To the soft long sleep, to the broad sweet
bosom of death,
But the flower of their souls he shall take not
away to shame us,
Nor the lips lack song forever that now lack
breath.

115 127 Keble in the *Lyra Innocentium*, first published in 1846, and in *Miscellaneous Poems* wrote much of childhood. Many of his poems would have gained in unity of idea and in level of excellence had he pruned them. Nevertheless, if space allowed, more of them would be included in this collection, particularly *The Sisters* ('I mark'd where vernal meads were bright')

118 130 Dated June 1819. Little William Snelley died at Rome.

120 133, Clare was born in a day-labourer's cottage at
134 Helpstone, near Peterborough. He obtained some education by his own extra work as a plough-boy, and saved up a shilling to buy a copy of Thomson's *Seasons*. After publishing two small volumes of verse and a brief space of happy married life, his mind gave way and he was confined in the Northampton County Asylum. It was there, with only streets to look out upon, that these poems were written. His mind constantly recurred to the beloved scenes of his childhood.

121 135 Hartley Coleridge inherited a fair share of his father's gifts as well as of his instability. His poetry is largely self-delineative. After relinquishing his Fellowship at Oriel he lived chiefly in the Lake District. His child poetry owes much to the influence of Wordsworth.

122 137 Margaret's first birthday—March 3rd, 1843.

127 143 From *The Marriage of Tirzah and Ahirad*, 1827. The passage goes on

In his adamantine eye
None might discern his agony;
But they who had grown hoary next his side,
And read his stern dark face with deepest
skill,
Could trace strange meanings in that lip of
pride,
Which for one moment quivered and was still.

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- 127 144 Born in a farmhouse in the lovely Vale of Blackmore which his poems celebrate, Barnes after being a schoolmaster graduated at Cambridge and was ordained at the age of 46. In 1862 he became Rector of Winterbourne-Came near Dorchester. He first began to write with the object of preserving the Dorsetshire dialect, but has won a permanent place among English poets. His lyrics, full of pathos and humour, unusually varied and very perfect in form, are of the sweetest and purest water. Their dialect—which is inseparable from them—has militated against their popularity, and it is true that their language is a difficulty. But, as Matthew Arnold has said of the language of Burns and Chaucer, where the difficulty is greater, 'it is a difficulty to be unhesitatingly accepted and overcome.'
- 128 145 *Welshnut* = walnut *drashel* = threshold
Childhood, The Welshnut Tree, The Turnstile, The Little Sister, The Motherless Child, The Slanten Light o' Fall, are reprinted by permission of the publishers, Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.
- 134 151 Sara Coleridge was the daughter of S. T. Coleridge, and married Henry Nelson Coleridge, her cousin, who edited her father's posthumous works.
- 135 152 It is pleasing to have even a passing reference to Sir Joshua Reynolds in this volume. Palgrave has a sonnet on Reynolds' *Age of Innocence*, but, on grounds of which he himself would have approved, it is not printed here to represent him.
- 139 154 It is to be doubted whether any other Public Elementary School can boast such a school song as this, which is the glory of St. Mark's, Morwenstow.
- 140 155 From *Fifty Sonnets*, most of them printed for the first time in Nicoll and Wise's *Literary Anecdotes of the Nineteenth Century*.
- 145 157 l. 1. *Is there a word, or jest, or game* —the classic instance of a memory of childhood adding poignancy to sadness, in Vergil's eighth *Eclogue*, occurs to the mind—lines beloved of Voltaire and Macaulay:
- Sepibus in nostris parvam te roscida mala
 (Dux ego vester eram) vidi cum matre legentem
 Alter ab undecimo tum me jam acceperat
 annus;
 Jam fragiles poteram ab terra contingere ramos.
- 146 158 Reference must be made to two other perfect

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word-pictures Mrs Browning has drawn of little children .

She looked such kinship to the flowers,
Was but a little taller
in *A Child's Grave at Florence*, and
Frank, obedient,—waiting still
On the turnings of your will
in *A Portrait*.

- 159 168 Charles Tennyson—who later took the surname Turner—elder brother to Alfred, Lord Tennyson, was born at Somersby in Lincolnshire. Most of his life was passed as Vicar of Grasby. His sonnets were published collectively in 1880. They are idyllic, original, intensely human and well worthy of study. The depth of his love of children is nowhere more clearly seen than in the last lines of the sonnet *To a 'Tenting' Boy*, where he finds a joy in what to many is a nuisance

' And, whilst I slowly climb
The grassy slope, with ready watch drawn out,
To meet thy constant question of the time,
Methinks I owe thee much, my little boy,
For this new duty, and its quiet joy '

- See note on Lord Rosslyn's *Bed-time* (No 225)
160 170 ' Her little scroll of prayer ' is the extract from the *Book of the Dead*, which was always placed in the hands of the deceased
162 173 From *In Memoriam*, xlv.
164 175 From *Sea Dreams*
166 178 Palgrave has this note on *Emmie* in the *Golden Treasury Second Series*, " It should be remembered that this is a little drama, in which the Hospital Nurse, not the Poet, is supposed to be speaking throughout. The two children, whose story was published in a Parish Magazine, are the only characters here described from actual life " (written on the authority of A. T., 1884)'
167 — 1 2 *Oorah* is a drug that paralyses the nerves of motion, but does not affect those of sensation.
170 179 These lines and the song following (No. 180) are taken from *The Princess*
172 182 Henry Alford was Dean of Canterbury from 1857 till his death. Besides editing the Greek Testament he was a diligent writer of verse. Two of his best known hymns are *Come, ye thankful people, come*, and *Ten thousand times ten thousand*.
— 183 *Tirlin*'=rapping, *ben*=into the parlour (but *and ben*=kitchen and parlour); *singing grey thrums*=purring; *speldert*=stretched; *wauk-*

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- rife* = wakeful ; *stousie* = a stout and healthy child ; *run his lane* = run alone
- 173 184 'Alfred, dear friend'—Alfred Domett, son of one of Nelson's captains and one of Browning's oldest friends, spent thirty years of his life in New Zealand, becoming a member of its Parliament and from 1862 to 1863 its Prime Minister. He was himself no mean poet
- 176 186 Aubrey Thomas de Vere was the third son of Sir Aubrey de Vere. He joined the Church of Rome
- 177 188 There are frequent references to children in George Eliot's (Mary Ann Cross') novels. Chapter xiv of *Silas Marner* ends 'In old days there were Angels who came and took men by the hand and led them away from the City of Destruction. We see no white-winged Angels now. But yet men are led away from threatening destruction. A hand is put into theirs, which leads them gently forth towards a calm and bright land, so that they look no more backward ; and the hand that leads them may be a little child's'
- I am indebted to Messrs Blackwood & Sons for permission to reproduce these stanzas from *Brother and Sister*
- 182 192 Included by permission of the literary executors of Walt Whitman and Messrs Doubleday, Page & Co
- 186 194 'The 'Snowdrop Monument,' known also as the 'Sleeping Children,' stands at the east end of the south choir-aisle in Lichfield Cathedral. It bears the inscription :

Sacred to the Memory of
Ellen Jane and Marianne
only children
of the late Revd William Robinson
and Ellen Jane his wife
Their affectionate mother,
in fond remembrance of their "Heav'n-lov'd
innocence,"
consigns their resemblances to this sanctuary,
in humble gratitude
for the glorious assurance that
"Of such is the Kingdom of God"

It is the work of Sir Francis Chantrey and was set in the Cathedral in 1817. The Rev William Robinson, who died in 1812, was Prebendary of the Cathedral and Rector of Swinnerton. John Keble, W Lisle Bowles, Mrs Hemans, and others have been moved to write verses upon it. Two snowdrops are in the right hand of the younger child, who was burnt to death ; it is

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- told that it was in trying to reach some snow-drops on the mantle-shelf that her frock caught fire
This poem is reproduced from Jean Ingelow's *Poetical Works* by permission of Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co.
- 197 198 Mrs Alexander (*née* Humphreys) was born in Co Tyrone. She was a direct descendant of Jeremy Taylor, and published several volumes of verse including *Hymns for Little Children*, 1848. Two of her best known hymns are *The roseate hues of early dawn* and *There is a green hill far away*.
- 198 199, W B Rands is the author of the *Lilliput Levée*.
200 *The Flowers* and *Praise and Love* are included by permission of Mr John Lane
- 199 201 William Johnson, who assumed the name of Cory in 1872, was one of the most brilliant and versatile Eton masters of last century. This poem is reproduced from his *Ionica* by permission of Messrs. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. A book, *Extracts from the Letters and Journals of William Cory*, for subscribers only, was printed at the Oxford University Press in 1897.
- 200, 202- These poems are included by permission of the
201 204 publishers, George Bell & Sons, Ltd.
- 203 206 Brought up in the little village of Ballyshannon in Co Donegal, Allingham is at his best in describing little things, momentary happenings, and detached scenes
The two poems by William Allingham are included by permission of Messrs Longmans, Green & Co
- 207 George Macdonald was essentially more a poet than a novelist. The second stanza of the lyric *The Grace of Grace* reveals the depth of his reverence for children :
- Had I the grace to win the grace
Of childhood, loving, shy, apart,
The child should find a nearer place,
And teach me resting on my heart.
- 204 208 This poem from Sydney Dobell's *Poetical Works* is included by kind permission of Mr John Murray.
- 207 209 Palgrave has written much of children in *Idyls and Songs*, 1848-1854, and *Lyrical Poems* (1871). Reference must be made to the lines *Margaret Wilson*, in which is told very simply and tenderly the story of a little heroine who saved the three smaller children of whom she had charge from a passing train—at the cost of her life. With the present poem, *On the Love of Children*, may be compared the sonnet by Elizabeth Rachel

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- Chapman on the same theme in *A Little Child's Wreath* 'I quote four lines :
- Pure, He could feel their splendid guilelessness ;
 Kingly, He recognised their royalty ;
 Longsuffering, He was one with them, nor less
 Grandly magnanimous than they was He.
- 208 210 From 'London Bridge,' in *Visions of England* (1881) It is fitting to have a tribute—and such a tribute—to Sir Thomas More in this volume. The lines beginning 'Hence among those he stands' sound a trumpet-note that has in it an almost Miltonic ring.
- Sir T. More has left a few poems behind him, written in his youth. Among these are metrical stanzas, after the manner of the time, explanatory of some tapestry in his father's house depicting nine stages of man's life. The first of these represented childhood in the figure of a boy whipping a top. More's lines are
- I am called Chylldhod, in play is all my mynde,
 To cast a coyte, a cockstele, and a ball ;
 A toppe can I set, and dryve in its kynde,
 But would to God these hatefull bookes all
 Were in a fyre brent to poudre small !
 Than myght I lede my lyfe alwayes in play,
 Which lyfe God sende me to myne endyng day
- 209 211 Adelaide Anne Procter, daughter of Bryan Waller Procter, published her first verses in *Household Words*, of which Dickens was editor, under the name of 'Mary Berwick'. She refused to send them in her own name, lest Dickens should be tempted to take them, not for their merit, but on account of his friendship for her father and herself.
- 210 212 Richard Wilton graduated at St Catharine's College, Cambridge, and became Rector of Londesborough. His poems deserve to be better known
- 211 213 Few poets in our own day have written more of childhood than the Manx poet and quondam Master of the Crypt School, Gloucester, T. E. Brown. The tenderness and dainty beauty of these poems need no pointing out
- 217 222 Christina Rossetti afterwards added two stanzas to this poem. They are omitted here. For permission to include this poem I am indebted to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
- 223 'Jewis Carroll's' Diary for July 4th, 1862, has the following entry. 'I made an expedition up the river to Godstow with the three Liddells ;

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- we had tea on the bank there, and did not reach Christ Church till half-past eight' A later entry adds 'On which occasion I told them the fairy-tale of "Alice's Adventures Underground," which I undertook to write out for Alice.' 'Alice' herself is *Secunda* in the poem Henry George Liddell was Dean of Christ Church from 1855 to 1891
- 219 225 Reprinted from the Earl of Rosslyn's *Sonnets*, with acknowledgments to Messrs W Blackwood & Sons
Swinburne, in his *Studies in Prose and Poetry*, says of this sonnet 'There are loftier sonnets in the language, there is no lovelier sonnet in the world than the late Lord Rosslyn's *Bedtime* "It gives a very echo to the seat where love is throned"—the painless and stainless love of little children Landor might and would have given a place to this divine sonnet and its coequal companion in a truly blessed immortality, Mr Tennyson-Turner's on *Letty's Globe*, in his list of exceptions to the common rule or the conventional axiom which denies that any work of man's can ever be absolutely perfect'
- 220 226 Eric Noel—the Hon Roden Noel's youngest son—died at the age of five, and is the subject of his most pathetic and one of his best books of poems—*A Little Child's Monument* (1881) This poem is included by permission of Messrs Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co, Ltd.
- 221 227 From the Prologue to *The Earthly Paradise*, by kind permission of Messrs Longmans, Green & Co
- 228 The same idea is expressed by Victor Hugo in the lines
- A chaque pas qu'il fait, l'enfant derrière lui
Laisse plusieurs petits fantômes de lui-même
On se souvient de tous, on les pleure, on les aime,
Et ce seraient des morts s'il n'était vivan-t, lui
- 222- 229- It is regretted that, owing to difficulties of copy-
224 232 right, Swinburne is so inadequately represented in this anthology His genius touched infancy and childhood with peculiar delicacy and reverence. The extracts here included are reproduced by permission of Mr. William Heinemann.
- 224 233 My uncle, William Threlkeld Edwards, of Pembroke College, Cambridge, was drowned at the age of twenty-one whilst bathing in the Cam His poems were published after his death in *Papers of an Undergraduate*
- 225 234 Reprinted, with acknowledgments to Messrs.

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- Chet' to & Windus, from the St Martin's Library Edition of the *Poetical Works of Bret Harte, including Some Later Verses*
- 226 235 This poem is reproduced by permission of Messrs. Kegan Paul, Tiench, Trubner & Co, Ltd
- 229 238 From *Aspromonte*
- 230- 239, These poems are reprinted by permission of Mr
- 231 240 John Murray.
- 231 241 This extract is reprinted by permission of Messrs Chatto & Windus
- 235 244 Written for *The Magic Meare*, a Masque, by Louis N Parker and G Stuart Ogilvie
- 238- 249, These poems are reprinted from Edward Carpenter's *Towards Democracy* by permission of
- 240 250 Messrs George Allen & Unwin, Ltd
- 241 252 The same theme forms the subject of the sonnet beginning 'A man that sees by chance his pictures made' in *The Growth of Love* For the use of this poem and of *Be like One of These*, and *Millicent*, I have to acknowledge the generosity of Dr Bridges and the permission of his publisher, Mr John Murray
- 242 254 These lines by Sarah Chauncey Woolsey—better known as 'Susan Coolidge'—appeared in *Scribner's Magazine* in 1872 They were copied and hung near the Cradle Tomb in King Henry VII's Chapel, Westminster, at the instance of Lady Augusta Stanley The baby is Sophia, fourth daughter of James I, 'a roval rosebud plucked by premature fate and snatched away from her parents that she might flourish again in the Rosary of Christ'

(SOPHIA ROSULA REGIA PRÆPROPERO FATO
DECERPTA, ET JACOBO MAGNÆ BRITANNIÆ,
FRANCIÆ ET HIBERNIÆ REGI ANNÆQUE REGINÆ
PARENTIBUS EREPTA, UT IN CHRISTI ROSARIO
REFLORESCAT, HIC SITA EST JUNII XXIII
REGNI R. I IIII MDCVI)

She was born at Greenwich in 1606 and died in infancy. Her sister Mary, born in 1605, who died aged three, lies buried close beside her. Near by repose the bones of the two little princes murdered in the Tower.

- 243- 255- Possibly these poems of William Canton's will
- 246 259 come as a delightful surprise to many Their simplicity, truth, variety and tenderness are worthy of such a friend of children as the author of *The Invisible Playmate* and *A Child's Book of Saints The Comrades*, from which they are taken, deserves to be better known.

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247, 260, John Bannister Tabb—an American by birth—
 248 261 was cabin-boy in a blockade ship during the
 American Civil War. He subsequently became
 a priest. In his later years he was blind. His
 work is chiefly religious, and consists mainly of
 short lyrics. Felicity of phrase, personification,
 and a happy mingling of the familiar with the
 majestic are features of his verse, but there is
 much more. He depicts himself in *The Old*
Pastor

How long, O Lord, to wait
 Beside thy open gate?
 My sheep with many a lamb
 Have entered, and I am
 Alone, and it is late

Messrs Burns, Oates & Washbourn, Ltd, have
 kindly given permission for the use of these two
 poems

248 262 From *The Pageant of Life* by kind permission of
 the author's literary executor, Mr Henry J.
 Glaisher.

249 263 Acknowledgments for the use of this poem are
 due to Mr William Heinemann

— 264 This hitherto unpublished sonnet was given to
 me by Mr Edmond Holmes for this anthology

252-266- The *Child's Garden of Verses* was published when
 256 270 Stevenson was thirty-five. The idea of writing
 it, his mother has recorded, was first suggested
 to his mind by Mrs Sale Barker's rhymes in
Kate Greenaway's Birthday Book for Children.
 Stevenson had a power of recovering not only
 the thoughts and ideas but the feelings of his
 childhood that is almost unique. Sir Graham
 Balfour in his *Life* quotes Baudelaire's definition
 of genius, 'Le génie n'est que l'enfance retrouvée
 à volonté'. The *Child's Garden* struck a new
 note in English child-poetry and revealed new
 possibilities.

In a letter, dated *Nice, Feb* 1883, to his nurse
 Alison Cunningham, telling her that L.B. was
 dedicating the book to her as 'the only person
 who will understand it,' Stevenson wrote of it
 as 'this little book, which is all about my child-
 hood'. But, personal as the *Child's Garden* is,
 not only his own mother but a vast company of
 mothers and fathers as they walk in it

may chance to hear once more
 The little feet upon the floor

For permission to include these five poems my
 acknowledgments are due to Messrs Longmans,
 Green & Co. and Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.

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- 256 271 Included by kind permission of the Oxford University Press
- 257 272 From *A Vision of Souls and Other Poems*
- 258-273, These two poems are included by permission of
- 260 274 Mr. John Lane
- 264 275, These two poems are included by permission of
- 276 Mr. John Lane
- 265 277 Dedicated to 'A M P', whose identity I have been unable to trace
- 267-278- Acknowledgment is made to Messrs Burns,
- 273 281 Oates & Washbourne, Ltd., for permission to reprint these poems
- Francis Thompson holds a high place in the poetry of childhood. As with Wordsworth, a deep reverence for childhood formed part of the permanent background of his mind, and children and their ways furnish him with some of his most striking imagery—the 'freak Of heavenly hide-and-seek' in *Any Saint* for instance
- Thompson is great in the wealth and splendour of his imagination, in the subtlety of his thought, and in his mastery of language. The story of his almost starving in the streets of London can be read in Mr Wilfrid Meynell's delicately beautiful biographical note in the volume of *Selected Poems*. One incident of those dark London days and nights is told by himself

I waited the inevitable last

Then there came past

A child, like thee, a spring-flower, but a flower
Fallen from the budded coronal of Spring,
And through the city-streets blown withering
She passed,—O brave, sad, loveliest, tender
thing!

And of her own scant pittance did she give,

That I might eat and live

Then fled, a swift and trackless fugitive

Therefore I kissed in thee

The heart of childhood, so divine for me.

From the children of Mr and Mrs Wilfrid Meynell—the family in London into which he was received—Thompson learnt anew

The subtle sanctities which dart

From childish lips' unvalued precious brush,

and they were the inspiration of much of his child poetry

- 268 279 The subject of this poem is a village child, whom the poet met on the common at Storrington.

- 270 280 Mr Wilfrid Meynell, in the Biographical Sketch already referred to, says of these lines, 'Constant

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to the end, when he died some newly pencilled lines were found, addressed "To Olivia," a yet younger sister, recalling the strains of fifteen years before ' They breathe, indeed, the spirit of the last line of *To my Godchild* .

Look for me in the nurseries of Heaven.

275, 283, From *The Crescent Moon* Dādā = elder brother.

276 284

276 285, For permission to use Mrs. Hinks's two poems
286 I am indebted to Messrs Sidgwick & Jackson,
Ltd

278 287 Included by kind permission of the Proprietors
of *Punch*

279 288 Perhaps the most perfectly simple and tender
portrait of a little girl in our poetry Mrs.
Meynell has also written, with penetrating
insight, of early childhood in seven essays called,
in a phrase of Francis Thompson's, *The Darling
Young*

282 292 From *Poems New and Old*, published by Mr John
Murray

— 293 Permission to include this poem has been given
by the publisher, Mr John Lane

285 296 Compare with this Swinburne's *Étude Réaliste*, in
which ends with the beautiful lines

No rosebuds yet by dawn impearled
Match, even in loveliest lands,
The sweetest flowers in all the world—
A baby's hands

286 298 Reprinted with acknowledgments to Messrs.
Duckworth & Co

— 299 For permission to use this poem I am indebted
to Mr Martin Secker, the publisher of Mr. F M
Hueffer's *Collected Poems*

287, 300, These two poems are included by permission of
288 301 Messrs Longmans, Green & Co, publishers of
Mr de la Mare's *Songs of Childhood*

289 302 For permission to use this poem I am indebted
to the publishers, Messrs. J. M. Dent & Sons,
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291 304 Reprinted by permission of the publisher of *The
Golden Threshold*, Mr William Heinemann

293 305 This poem is inscribed 'To the memory of our
sister, Eacy Young'

294 306 Reprinted by permission of the publisher of
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301- 307, These poems are included by permission of
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- 312 314 An extract from the poem *Music*, reproduced by permission of the publisher of *New Poems*, Mr Elkin Mathews
- 315 From *Birds of Paradise*, by permission of the publishers, Messrs Methuen & Co, Ltd
- 313 316 From *Collected Poems of W. H. Davies* (London, Field), by permission of the publisher
- 314 317, From *Memories of Childhood*, with acknowledgments to the publishers, Messrs Selwyn & Blount
- 316 318, 318 From *Blue Days and Green Days*, with acknowledgments to the publishers, Messrs Maunsel & Co, Ltd
- Wizard *lear* *lear*, or *lere* = lore, scholarship. Cf Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, VI iv 4
- 3 He was invulnerable made by magicke *lear*
- 317 320 From *The Littlest One*, by permission of Messrs Harrap & Co
- 321 Reprinted from *The Fairy Green* by kind permission of the author and Messrs Methuen & Co, Ltd
- 318- 322- From *Bread and Circuses* (John Lane) Reprinted by kind permission of the Proprietors of *Punch*.
- 320 324
- 321 325 From *Nursery Lays of Nursery Days* (Blackwell)
- 325 329 This poem, like the one following (No 330), is printed in *The Oxford Book of Australasian Verse* It is reprinted here by kind permission of Thomas C. Lothian Proprietary Ltd, Melbourne, Australia I had looked long for a poem expressing adequately the idea of *Incarnation*—and found it at the Antipodes.

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